**Athletics** European Championships

# Britain revel in a hatful of gold

**Duncan Mackay in Budapest**

BY THE end of the European Championships in the Nep Stadium last Sunday there were so many British athletes running round the track on laps of honour that they were colliding with one another.

Gold medals for Jonathan Edwards in the triple jump, Steve Backley in the javelin and the men's 4 x 400 metres relay team brought the total to nine. It left Britain on top of the medal tables for the first time as traditional superpowers such as Germany and Russia were left floundering in their wake.

Backley was the first to claim gold when he won the javelin, to join Linford Christie and Colin Jackson as the only Britons to win his event on three consecutive occasions.

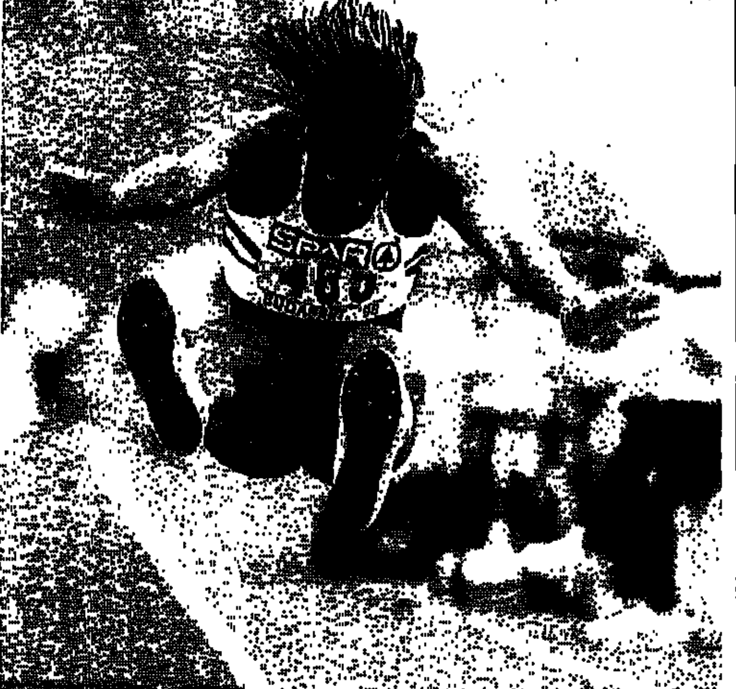
The 29-year-old Kent thrower effectively killed the competition stone dead with his first effort, which arched out to 89.72 metres, beating the championship record he had set in qualifying. "This was a fantastic night for British athletics," he said. "It's like turning the clock back to the glory days."

Backley's joy was complete when his training partner Mick Hill threw 86.92m in the fifth round to win the silver medal. Edwards did to his competitors in the triple jump what Backley had done when, with his first effort, he leapt out to 17.84m — another championship record. He then sailed out to 17.99m with his last jump to prove he is back to the form he showed in 1995 when he won the world title and broke the world record three times.

If Britain were thought to be guaranteed at least one gold medal it was in the 4 x 400m relay. But they were pushed hard by a Polish quartet buoyant after their country's successful week. Mark Hylton and Jamie Baulch gave Britain a good start and the individual champion Iwan Thomas stretched the lead with a split of 44.3sec. Mark Richardson, so distraught after finishing only third to Thomas in the individual event, had to battle hard to hold off Robert Mackowiak, who had beaten him to the silver two days earlier, as he anchored the team home.

The women's team, who until the final day had only the victory of Denise Lewis in the heptathlon to cheer, put the icing on a very large cake by winning a bronze medal in their 4 x 400m relay, a race won by Germany. Allison Curbishley clinched the medal by holding off Ion Tirlea, the 400m hurdles champion, in the final few strides and fell into the arms of her team-mates Donna Fraser, Vicky Jamison and Katharine Merry.

It left Britain with 16 medals in total, an amazing change in fortunes for a team labelled no-hopers 12 months ago after failing to win any gold medals in the 1996 Olympics and 1997 World Championships.



Hair-raising stuff . . . it's feet first for Denise Lewis as she lands her gold in the heptathlon PHOTO: MICHAEL COOPER/ALLSPORT

"We are on the verge of something special with these performances," said David Moorcroft, the embattled chief executive of British Athletics. "We've had one or two years when youngsters watching this sport might have thought it was in the doldrums. To win nine gold medals is mind-boggling."

Britain's gold rush started in spectacular fashion when Darren Campbell and Dwain Chambers showed there is life after Linford Christie by taking first and second in the 100m. The moment was made even sweeter for Campbell by the fact that his time of 10.04sec took 0.04 off the championship record Christie had set in Helsinki four years ago. Not that Christie would have minded: he coaches Campbell.

The runners in British vests then claimed an unprecedented clean sweep in the 200m when Doug Walker, Doug Turner and Julian Golding took the podium. Further joy was provided by Thomas, who raced to the 400m title. Dalton Grant, in the meantime, was picking up his first major medal outdoors by coming second in the high jump.

The gold rush continued when Lewis claimed her medal for heptathlon, Jackson added his name to the honour in the 110m hurdles, and the men's 4x100 sprint relay quartet of Allyn Condon, Campbell, Walker and Golding left the field gasping for breath.

Ireland also had their best championships thanks mainly to Sonia O'Sullivan. The 28-year-old Cobh athlete became the first woman to win the 5,000m and 10,000m double in a major championships.

O'Sullivan used the same tactics in the 5,000m on Sunday which had carried her to success over Paula Radcliffe in the 10,000m five days earlier. She sat on the shoulder of Romania's Gabriela Szabo, the world champion, and then launched a withering sprint in the last 120 metres to win in 15min 6.5sec.

## Final medals table

| | G | S | B |
|---|---|---|---|
| Great Britain | 9 | 4 | 3 |
| Germany | 8 | 7 | 8 |
| Russia | 6 | 9 | 7 |
| Poland | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| Romania | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Ukraine | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Italy | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| Portugal | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Spain | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| France | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Ireland | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Hungary | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Bulgaria | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Greece | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Estonia | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Czech Republic | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| Finland | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| Switzerland | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Latvia | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Slovenia | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Sweden | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Belarus | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Austria | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Lithuania | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Netherlands | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Norway | 0 | 0 | 1 |

## Cryptic crossword by Paul

**Across**

1 A cause for maintaining pose (6)
4 See 22
9 Injury restricts veteran Italian team, about 50, once a power in the land (6,9)
10 See 14
11 Has a lengthy stretch and a cage for a prisoner (8)
12 Card with lion sent in the mail, perhaps? (8)
14, 8, 10 'Methuselah's Dead', possibly, by 24 (3,3,3,3,3,3)
15 Game score halved by evil return (6)
18 Establishment failed tragic Princess followed by tabloid charge (8)
21 Applies fresh colour with pen, and is Art Nouveau (8)
22, 4 Aggregate in polluted French sea results in flat feet (6,6).
24 Gay men weren't his novel! (6,9)
25 Principality needs a Nobel Peace Prize winner (6)
26 See 16

**Down**

1, 18 down Changed, fresher attitude made it unnecessary for cleaner (7,6)
2 Mongrel is vexed (5)
3 Weirdo gets the occasional delivery (7)
5 Sheepish male needs some fortification (7)
6 Women's party; no-one straight is in for a frightful night! (9)
7 Newspaper seller keeps 100 in shoe (7)
8 See 14
13 Cast-iron plane is without equal (9)
16, 26 Provides definition for those raised out of curiosity (7,6)
17 Moonlight etc, so up comes Beelzebub (7)
18 See 1 down
19 Agonise replacing Queen with diamonds (should be adequate) (7)
20 Omnipotent attire? (7)
23 Deduction of 101 to leave 50 standing (5)

**Last week's solution**

BOTTOMUPWARDS
F V O A E R I H
ALEXANDER CARVE
L R D I F H G A
LOFTY SNOWFIELD
I I O R E O
NAVARIN MOLOTOV
G E E O R E
INSIDER SUNNIER
N E O H G H
LEMONSOLE PEKOE
O I S T R I S E
VERDI ALIMENTAL
E T G G F C E S
CHANGEOFHEART

**Rugby Union** Tri-Nations Series: S Africa 29 Australia 15

# Springboks save best till last

**Greg Growden in Johannesburg**

SOUTH AFRICA's coach Nick Mallett described his Tri-Nations victors as the greatest Springbok team of all time after they overwhelmed Australia to win the southern hemisphere tournament here.

Mallett, who was enjoying his 13th straight victory as coach in the team's 14th successive Test win, said there was now no doubt that, by defeating Australia, South Africa had proved they were the world's best team.

"In the past I've downplayed it, but I can say it now: South Africa are the best team in the world and I am very proud to be a part of it," Mallett said.

Mallett's claim that his side are better than the 1995 World Cup victors and other illustrious line-ups, was backed up by his scrum-half Joost van der Westhuizen, who was involved in the other Ellis Park extravaganza three years ago when they won the World Cup final.

"I don't want to sound arrogant or overconfident but this is the best team I've played for," he said.

Van der Westhuizen, alongside his captain Gary Teichmann, led the Springboks around Ellis Park for a victory lap before 63,000 fans in scenes reminiscent of 1995 when they defeated New Zealand.

Mallett and Van der Westhuizen argued that this was a better effort than 1995 as it involved playing top-class opposition week in, week out all over the southern hemisphere, relying upon enormous courage, stamina and willpower to finish unbeaten after four Tests.

South Africa kept their best Tri-Nations performance until last, with an exceptional defensive effort basically blotting Australia out of the game and nullifying their best asset, the ability to string long phases of play together.

Another crucial factor was Van der Westhuizen successfully targeting the talented but still inexperienced fly-half Stephen Larkham. "I expected more from the Australian pack and more from Larkham," Van der Westhuizen said.

"From tight phases I looked at Larkham and then he looked at me. He started shouting something to [Australia's scrum-half] George Gregan, and immediately took three steps back. The moment Larkham stood back Australia lost 20 yards, and that's where they lost the game."

Australia now play a fragile New Zealand team on Saturday in the last of the three Bledisloe Cup Tests.



The Guardian Weekly

Vol 159, No 10
Week ending September 6, 1998



# Carnival spirit draws a record crowd

**Amelia Gentleman**

MORE than 2 million people paraded through west London on Monday as carnival fever in Notting Hill took on record proportions.

Despite unprecedented number of visitors to what has become Europe's largest street party, the event was described by police as one of the quietest, with fewer than 50 arrests.

But with crime levels down to a record low, "quiet" was perhaps not the most appropriate description of an occasion that saw the usually sedate streets of Notting Hill transformed into a open-air dance floor, with the deafening noise from several hundred sound systems.

"In terms of the music and the exuberant atmosphere the carnival has been anything but peaceful," said organiser Ansel Wong.

Richard Branson, whose sponsorship led to the event this year being named the Virgin Atlantic Notting Hill Carnival, was there with his family.

Wearing a striped cat suit and dancing barefoot inside a giant cocktail glass alongside a vast bottle of Virgin cola, Mr Branson was keen to promote his firm's new flight destinations. But the Virgin banners were overshadowed by the parade's spectacular floats and the stream of pink, yellow and turquoise feather boas and sequinned costumes.

The firm police presence, down to 3,800 this year, annoyed some. "Seeing so many of them, it's like it's their carnival not ours," said student Jermene Gray, aged 18, from Notting Hill.



A reveller struts her feathery stuff at the carnival PHOTO: ROSIE HALLAM

# Russian MPs push Yeltsin to the edge

**James Meek in Moscow**

RUSSIA'S political foes — President Boris Yeltsin and parliament — were locked in potentially their most dangerous confrontation this week after angry MPs dealt a humiliating defeat to Viktor Chernomyrdin, the acting prime minister supposed to rescue Russia from its economic abyss.

After a contemptuous 251 to 94 vote in the state Duma on Monday against his becoming prime minister, Mr Chernomyrdin declared he would begin forming a government anyway. Mr Yeltsin immediately renominated him for the post.

With the Duma seemingly set on rejecting his choice again, and Mr Yeltsin equally stubborn in nominating no one else, parliament could be dissolved within the next two weeks, setting the country on an uncharted political path.

With all large business transactions frozen for the second week running, and shops running out of stocks bought before the rouble plunged, ordinary Russians will start to feel the pinch within days.

President Clinton, who arrived in Moscow on Tuesday for a two-day visit, risked becoming a participant in the conflict. Mr Yeltsin, who has lost much of what remained of his authority, is likely to use "friend Bill" as a badge of his weight in the world.

The lack of a confirmed government delayed plans by Tony Blair to call an emergency meeting of ministers from the Group of Seven (G7) leading industrial nations to discuss the Russian crisis.

Mr Blair held a 20-minute telephone conversation with Mr Yeltsin on Monday. As chairman of G7, the British prime minister told Mr Yeltsin the group was ready to help, but that aid must be linked to continuing economic reform, a Downing Street spokesman said.

As concern grew about the impact of the Russian crisis on the launch of the euro, the European Union finance commissioner, Yves-Thibault de Silguy, said the 11 countries due to launch the single currency next year should hold talks. The EU is Russia's largest trading partner.

"Forty per cent of Russia's foreign trade is with Europe, and only 5 per cent is with the United States," Mr Silguy said. "But it's Clinton who's going to Russia on Tuesday. We have the means to act."

There is still no clear sign of which way Moscow will move to head off the emergency, although the former Argentine economics minister, Domingo Cavallo, who stopped inflation with a currency squeeze and tough privatisation, arrived in Moscow to offer his advice.

Few expected Mr Chernomyrdin to be backed by the Duma, but even he was taken aback by the attacks. Most speakers blamed his time as prime minister in 1992-98 for bringing Russia to its simultaneous debt default and devaluation last month. They demanded that Mr Yeltsin agree to a government formed by the parliamentary majority.

"You would not be able to cope; there would be a collapse deeper than that which has already taken place," Gennady Zyuganov, the Communist leader and head of the dominant left-patriot coalition, told Mr Chernomyrdin.

He claimed he could call on the support of two-thirds of MPs and the upper house to have an effective coalition government in place before the end of the week.

Mr Chernomyrdin said after the vote that he would set up an acting government to begin work immediately. "A state cannot live without a government," he said. "Steps must be taken to pay arrears to the military, students and coal miners. I will deal with this."

Last Sunday Grigory Yavlinsky, the leader of the liberal Yabloko movement, said that Yabloko was ready to form a government, and he called on Mr Yeltsin to resign.

Earlier, one of the most powerful Russian businessmen and a close Chernomyrdin ally, Boris Berezovsky, said Mr Chernomyrdin's government should start working whatever the Duma decided.

"President Boris Yeltsin wants Viktor Chernomyrdin to become the prime minister, and I do not recall a case such as this where he changed his mind," he said.

If parliament rejects Mr Yeltsin's choice of prime minister twice more, the president has the power to dissolve it.

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Washington Post, page 15
Finance, page 22

# Howard calls poll before crisis bites

**Christopher Zinn in Sydney**

PAULINE HANSON and her anti-immigration One Nation party will face their first test of national support on October 3 after Australia's prime minister, John Howard, called an early general election last weekend.

Mr Howard's conservative Liberal-National coalition has turned the A$10.5 billion ($6 billion) deficit it inherited in 1996 into a surplus, in spite of the Asian crisis.

But the effects are starting to hurt Australian exports and tourism. Rather than wait until next May, when the constitution would have obliged him to call an election, Mr Howard has chosen to go to the country before the economy is hit harder by the Asian downturn.

The prime minister is pinning his hopes of defending the coalition's large majority on a plan to introduce a 10 per cent value added-style tax on goods and services, while cutting other taxes, including income tax.

Mr Howard believes the election will be fought over economic management and taxation reform. Kim Beazley, who leads the opposition Labor party, insists the issues will range far wider and include health, unemployment and the threat that One Nation could hold the balance of power in parliament.

Both leaders have said they would not join forces with Ms Hanson to form a government. But that resolve may be put to the test: after its surprise showing in the recent Queensland state poll, One Nation is expected to stand candidates for most of the Lower House's 148 seats.

"The battle lines are drawn and we're just raring to go," declared Ms Hanson, who has tapped a rich vein of voter discontent with her anti-Asian and anti-Aboriginal xenophobia.

Mr Beazley accuses Mr Howard of a failure of leadership for refusing to attack Ms Hanson outright and back multiculturalism and Aboriginal land rights. "Over the last couple of years, as a people, we have turned in on ourselves . . . We need to emerge from this election with our sense of generosity intact," he said.

It is only two and a half years since Labor was swept from office after 13 years by Mr Howard's landslide victory. Labor needs a swing of 4.5 per cent to regain power.

Besides the budget surplus and low inflation, Mr Howard's achievements include tighter gun laws and a promise of a referendum next year on whether Australia should become a republic in 2001.

But the spectre of One Nation, whose policies include tariff protection, liberal gun laws and zero net immigration, continues to hang over his government.

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Austria | AS30 | Malta | 50c |
| Belgium | BF80 | Netherlands | G 5 |
| Denmark | DK17 | Norway | NK 16 |
| Finland | FM 10 | Portugal | E300 |
| France | FF 14 | Saudi Arabia | SR 6.50 |
| Germany | DM 4 | Spain | P 300 |
| Greece | DR 500 | Sweden | SK 19 |
| Italy | L 3,500 | Switzerland | SF 3.80 |

# US air attacks were cowardly and cynical

*THE* answer to the photographer's question cited by Victoria Brittain in her report on the famine in southern Sudan — "I wondered what would happen if they were spindly white legs, would Uncle Sam's finest charge in with high technology to the rescue?" — would be: probably not (Unseen, they starve by the thousand, August 23).

When was the last time United States Marines were deployed with the primary purpose of alleviating starvation? It is no coincidence that extreme food scarcity exists only in countries where white legs, spindly or otherwise, are unlikely to be encountered. But poverty as such has rarely elicited much of a reaction from Uncle Sam; he prefers to get to the root of the problem by targeting the poor.

The air and missile strikes against Sudan and Afghanistan were yet another demonstration of Washington's tendency to dispatch its bombers to parts of the world that the International Monetary Fund and the multinationals can't reach. The act was at least as cowardly and despicable as the attacks in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, with one notable difference: it was carried out not by obsessive religious fanatics but by a state that considers itself the repository and guardian of Western civilisation.

It should by now be widely acknowledged that the accuracy of US weapons is a myth — they're about as "smart" as Dan Quayle; they kill indiscriminately. If the US wishes to put Osama bin Laden on trial for his alleged misdeeds, not too many eyebrows would have been raised had an undercover mission been authorised for the purpose. But that would have entailed risking American lives, which are obviously not as dispensable as Afghan, Sudanese, Iraqi or Libyan lives whenever the US chooses to "send a message".

Washington's latest bugbear is an outgrowth of the policies it has consistently followed in the Middle East through its strategic alliance with Israel and by propping up Arab despots throughout the region. In Afghanistan the Taliban are a direct consequence not so much of the disastrous Soviet invasion but of the manner in which the US contributed to resistance against successive pro-Moscow regimes. During much of the 1980s Washington was not just willing but actually eager to cavort with obscurantist warlords among the mojahedin and turned a blind eye to the inflow of fundamentalist volunteers from countries such as Algeria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Whether Bill Clinton would have sanctioned military action of dubious legality in the absence of a desperate desire to change the focus of news headlines is an open question. But the world would clearly be a safer place were the US president allowed to continue partaking of minor pleasures in the privacy of the Oval office, rather than trying to prove his virility on the world stage through acts that, more than anything else, betray a degree of impotence.
*Mahir Ali,*
*Mortdale, NSW, Australia*

*THE* United States says Osama bin Laden's group bombed its two embassies in Africa, and in response it struck at Afghanistan and Sudan. Does the US not see that attacking terrorism with terrorist tactics only serves to strengthen their cause? Two more people are dead in the Planet Hollywood restaurant in South Africa, and many others wounded. Most likely, we will read about or become a part of other tragedies elsewhere in the world.

The US president and policy makers who determined the "swift and decisive response" are safe, with the Secret Service protecting them. What about ordinary Americans and Europeans who wish to travel, do business and live in countries other than the US and Europe? Consider, for example, the fate of the Italian United Nations officer who was shot dead in Afghanistan.

The resentment against the US — and now also its allies — is growing increasingly sinister, and the US government's continued reliance on the opinion of an ill-informed public for gauging and justifying the direction of its foreign policy is sending it off course, the outcome of which we are observing globally.
*Nana Chen,*
*Taipei, Taiwan*

*ON HEARING* of the US bombings in Afghanistan and Sudan I thought: so, the US is policing the world again. I wonder how Americans would have responded if Britain had dropped a bomb on their capital to deter IRA terrorists?
*Silvia Dingwall,*
*Nussbaumen, Switzerland*

## NZ not about to ditch PR

*IN HIS* account of the breakdown of the coalition government in New Zealand Anthony Hubbard states that "New Zealanders are disillusioned with proportional representation" (NZ coalition hits the rocks, August 23). New survey data indicate this is not the case.

Because the coalition has not delivered the sort of government people expected, support for Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) is down to about a third of the electorate, at about the same level as support for first-past-the-post. But when people are asked whether they still want a parliament elected proportionally, a majority still favour PR, even when it is made clear that this is likely to mean coalition government rather than single-party government. When given the option, a majority of New Zealanders also acknowledge that it is "too soon to tell" about MMP.

Meanwhile the National party is working not on a return to pure first-past-the-post but instead on a "supplementary member" system as an alternative to MMP. Many feel that this combines the worst aspects of first-past-the-post and MMP, and it has the support of only a very small minority of New Zealanders.
*Jack Vowles,*
*University of Waikato,*
*Hamilton, New Zealand*

*IF* New Zealanders are disillusioned by their first MMP government this should not be taken to read that the disillusionment extends to the new electoral system. If nothing else MMP has concentrated the minds of politicians as never before, and it is clear that they are slow in getting the hang of working together for the good of the country. Opponents of MMP seem not to grasp that the first-past-the-post electoral system is a way of giving *carte blanche* to a political party for which the majority of people have not voted.
*Edwin R Nye,*
*Dunedin, New Zealand*

## Modified food is monstrous

*RICHARD BRAUN* (August 23) is guilty of perpetuating two of the most insidious myths put about by those who stand to gain financially from the application of genetic engineering to food production: that genetic engineering is merely a modern extension of the centuries-old tradition of selective cross-breeding, and that it will lead to improved world food security.

It is the height of irresponsibility to suggest that the random, hazardous and unperfected laboratory process of gene transfer between species that would never cross-breed in nature is little different from traditional breeding methods. Nature evolved mechanisms preventing cross-breeding between all but the most closely related species, yet mankind, trying yet again to prove its superiority over the rest of the natural world, is prepared to breach these control barriers through genetic engineering. Not for nothing have the results of this unsafe and unnecessary technology been dubbed "Frankenstein foods".

As for food security, what security can there be in the control of the global food supply being in the hands of a very few, very large multinational corporations such as Monsanto? These corporations — claiming their aim is sustainable agriculture — are quietly attempting to buy up the world's seed companies and are capable of denying poor farmers the chance to save seed by the production of the Terminator seed, genetically engineered to ensure that the harvest seeds are sterile. Sustainable agriculture or sustainable Monsanto?
*Susan Birley,*
*Wanborough, Wilts*

## World's workers still suffer

*LARRY ELLIOTT*, in quoting Karl Popper's "refutation" of Marx — that "child labour, working hours, the agony and the precariousness of the worker's existence have not increased; they have declined" — without comment, implicitly accepts Popper's claim (Fairytale with an unhappy ending, July 26).

While Popper's claim may be true for sections of the western European and North American working classes, for the majority of the world's workers Popper's claim is simply not true. The bonded labourers of India and Pakistan, the workers of Korea, Taiwan and Malaysia whose lack of labour rights ensure that "Asian firms [can flood] the market with computer chips at 'suicidal prices'", the workers in Shenzhen who "toil 12 hours a day in brutal conditions for low wages" (One day all this will be offices, July 26) are just a few examples of the "precariousness of the worker's existence".

The rise of fascism, Suharto's bloody military take-over in 1965, Pinochet in Chile, the Argentine junta, and the list can be extended, show how "the rich" have eliminated "revolutionary conditions". Marx, however, explained that revolutionary conditions arise because of the contradictions inherent within capitalist accumulation, one of which Larry Elliott refers to as "a massive over-supply of cars, steel, computer chips and software". In other words Marx's crisis of over-production.
*Anthony Bidgood,*
*Berlin, Germany*

## Briefly

*SHIMON PERES'S* vision of Israeli-Arab peace rang alarm bells for me in 1995 when he said that "Israel would be to its neighbouring Arab states as the United States is to Latin America". You need go no further than the Rio Grande to find out why. Mexico is the perfect supply of cheap labour that does not have US health and safety laws. US firms have created a flow of toxic liquid that is the Rio Grande, and the cancers and birth defects testify to the gross disparity between the two Americas.

Julian Borger describes how the lure of cheaper options is creating yet another ecological disaster (Palestinians pay price for Israel's toxic waste, August 2). Along with the dumping of radioactive waste in southern Lebanon, we are finding gross negligence and untold future damage in areas that under international law are illegally occupied.
*Laurence Aboukhater,*
*Melbourne, Australia*

*NATURALLY MEPs* will object to proposals to create a European Union second chamber made up of MPs from national parliaments, citing expense and duplication (Cook aims to curb power of Brussels, August 23). The answer is to remove the current first chamber, the European Parliament, and just have this second one.

It costs £1,600 ($2,600) a day to keep an MEP in Strasbourg. What in heaven's name do they do? An MP is expensive enough, at £2,400 a day, but at least they open the occasional fête and can be seen shouting and booing in Parliament. Possibly best of all might be to transfer all the members of the Lords to Strasbourg — £280 a day — where they can snooze as well as they can here.
*Michael Knowles,*
*Congleton, Cheshire*

"*AFTER* being let go from her job, she . . ." (A family's journey from Pusan, August 23). What kind of English is this? A symptom of political correctness, or was Anna really struggling to get out of her job, or, as I suspect, bad English? Journalists would do well to follow Sir Peter Medawar's advice to scientists when writing: brevity, cogency and clarity are the principal virtues, and the greatest of these is clarity.
*Elizabeth Heap-Talvela,*
*Espoo, Finland*

*WHILE* congratulating British Airways on ordering European aircraft at last (August 30), spare a thought for all the workers in the UK, France, Germany and Spain who will work very hard to build them — only for the airline to spray graffiti on the tails.
*David Waltham-Hier,*
*Twickenham, Middlesex*

The Guardian Weekly

September 6, 1998 Vol 159 No 10

Annual subscription rates are £49 United Kingdom; £55 Europe inc. Eire, USA and Canada; £63 Rest of World.
Letters to the Editor and other editorial correspondence to: The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ. Fax 44-171-242-0985 (UK: 0171-242 0985)
e-mail: weekly@guardian.co.uk
Subscription, change of address and e-mail inquiries to: gwsubs@guardian.co.uk







# North Korea fires missile over Japan

**John Gittings in Hong Kong
Jonathan Watts in Tokyo
and James Meek in Moscow**

NORTH KOREA stirred up a strategic weapons storm in the Pacific on Monday by launching a new, long-range ballistic missile which overflew Japan before splashing down in the ocean.

Pyongyang's cry for world attention shattered the limits of Western tolerance when it emerged that the Daepodong-1 rocket passed without permission through Japan's airspace.

Recognising for the first time that it is in range of its militaristic neighbour, Tokyo responded by withdrawing financial backing from the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation (Kedo), an international agreement that funds peaceful nuclear technology and energy supplies for the beleaguered communist regime.

"We see this as a very dangerous act," a senior Japanese government spokesman, Hiromu Nonaka, warned. "It will have a serious impact on the security of northeast Asia." Japan plans further diplomatic protests.

The United States secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, said the tests would be raised in talks with North Korea that resumed in New York this week. "We are concerned about it, as are the Japanese and the Russians," she said.

In extended Japanese television news broadcasts, commentators claimed the new missile was capable of carrying a 1,000kg nuclear, chemical or conventional warhead. Some Japanese analysts speculated that the missile's trajectory may have been caused by a malfunction. Japan's defence agency said the incident would encourage the government to approve plans to develop a missile defence system with the US.

Alarm bells sounded in Moscow after reports that Russia's early warning systems failed to spot the North Korean missile. Defence officials later claimed they had been able to track it.

Vladimir Yakovlev, the commander of Russian strategic rocketry, said North Korea had told Moscow of the launch in advance, according to Interfax news agency.

"However, the missile inadvertently changed its path and was not observed by Russian tracking hardware," Mr Yakovlev was quoted as saying.

US and Japanese intelligence had been on the alert for the test of the missile, but the incursion into Japanese airspace appears to have come as a shock. They monitored the rocket's second stage which passed over Japan to land 320km east in the Pacific. The first stage came down southeast of Vladivostok, in Russian territorial waters.

Pyongyang's action is alarming partly because its motives are often impenetrable. If the missile was intended to overfly Japan, it must have been designed to cause a strong reaction.

Such behaviour may appear deeply misguided for a country suffering acute hardship, with millions of its population desperately short of food. But North Korean leaders believe that its missile and nuclear potential is the only card left to play.

Pyongyang's action may be a clumsy attempt to gain the upper hand in negotiations with the US to implement the 1994 nuclear deal that began in New York last month. But hardliners in the leadership may have gone too far in seeking to please their leader, Kim Jong-il.

Before details of the missile overflight became clear, Kedo had announced that South Korea would fund 70 per cent of a $5 billion deal on supplying peaceful nuclear technology to the North. Japan, the US and the European Union are also contributors.

Observers believe the test was timed to coincide with next week's 50th anniversary of the regime's establishment. Mr Kim is expected to be formally named as state president.

The Daepodong-1 missile is believed to have a range of 2,000km — twice that of the Rodong missile, which North Korea has exported to Iran, Iraq and Syria.



Ethnic Albanians from the village of Vlaski Drenovac in Kosovo pay their respects at the grave of one of the three Mother Teresa society aid workers killed by Serbian shelling last week. They died while delivering humanitarian supplies to refugees PHOTOGRAPH: MLADEN ANTONOV

## S Africa condemns bomb

**David Beresford
in Johannesburg**

THE bomb in Cape Town's Planet Hollywood restaurant which killed one person and injured 27 was condemned across the political spectrum in South Africa last week.

Responsibility for the blast in a popular tourist area was claimed by an organisation called Muslims Against Global Oppression. But a spokesman for the group denied it, saying they were being "set up".

An extremist group of Muslim fundamentalists, also involved in a vigilante campaign against gangsters in the Cape Town area, was widely being held to blame for the atrocity.

Planet Hollywood, an upmarket burger chain set up by the actors Arnold Schwarzenegger, Sylvester Stallone and Bruce Willis, said that it would step up security. It warned other outlets linked to the United States to follow suit.

The attack was condemned by unions, business groups, political parties and individuals in South Africa ranging from President Nelson Mandela to leaders of conservative Afrikanerdom.

A spokesman said Mr Mandela was "shocked and angry", while the police minister, Sidney Mufamadi, blamed the explosion on "local operatives" working on behalf of "international terrorism".

"I think that the incident must be seen against the backdrop of recent events in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam," said Mr Mufamadi. "Shortly after the news of those incidents, we took urgent measures to step up security at official US buildings here."

Members of an FBI team investigating the recent bomb attacks on the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam arrived in South Africa to assess whether the atrocities were linked.

Tourist officials predicted it would have a long-term impact on the industry, which has been mushrooming in South Africa, particularly in Cape Town.

Three calls were made to South African radio and newspaper journalists claiming the attack had been the work of Muslims Against Global Oppression, a group which surfaced during President Clinton's recent visit to Cape Town.

The group is believed to be controlled by Qibla, an organisation of Muslim extremists which is reputed to run People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (Pagad). It has been conducting a "holy war" against criminals in the Coloured townships of the Cape flats, outside the city.

## Terror trial begins in France

**Paul Webster in Paris**

THE trial of 138 men and women accused of associating with Algerian terrorists opened on Tuesday with defence lawyers protesting against legislation that allows suspects to be held in custody indefinitely on the word of an examining magistrate.

French human rights organisations have informed their British and Irish counterparts of their opposition to a procedure similar to that proposed by the British government, which wants to allow judges to intern suspected terrorists on the word of senior police officers.

In the French case, many of those on trial in a converted gymnasium adjoining a prison in Fleury-Merogis, to the south of Paris, were arrested under a general accusation of associating with criminals. None of the defendants is charged with terrorist acts.

Some of the accused have been in custody for four years during which no evidence for their detention has been made public. Among them is the alleged leader of a logistical team, Mohammed Chalabi, who is charged with raising money and arms for anti-government forces in Algeria. His fellow accused include Mohammed Kerrouche, who was extradited from Britain last December to face charges of overseeing a European-wide terrorist logistical network.

The trial — expected to last two months — stems from a series of police sweeps in which hundreds of people were arrested across France as the authorities sought to break links between expatriate Algerians and anti-government groups such as the Islamic Salvation Front, and the hard line Armed Islamic Group.

Most have been released but many have spent months in jail without trial after being denounced as terrorists by the head of France's anti-terrorist service, Jean-Louis Bruguière. His investigators alleged that they belonged to one of three anti-government networks.

Mr Chalabi's defence counsel, Isabelle Coutant Peyre, said no proof had been given of her client's connection with fundamentalist groups, adding that the only established link between the 138 accused was the Muslim religion.

Mass arrests in France started two years before a wave of terrorist attacks in Paris and Lyon between July 1995 and January 1996.

A protest against the mass hearing has been signed by 42 defence lawyers, who say the trial is political and the rights of individual defence have been restricted.

UK terrorist bill, page 10

## The Week

**TWO suspects in the United States embassy bombings in Kenya — Khalid Salim believed to be Yemeni and Mohammed Saddiq Howaidah, believed to be Jordanian — were sent for trial in the US where they could face the death penalty.**
Washington Post, page 16

**INTERNATIONAL moves to rid Iraq of weapons of mass destruction lay in shambles with the resignation of Scott Ritter, a top United Nations weapons inspector, who said the monitoring had been neutralised some time ago by the Iraqis.**
Washington Post, page 16

**MALAYSIA'S highest court jailed opposition MP Lim Guan Eng, chairman of the Democratic Action Party, on charges of sedition, raising doubts about the independence of the judiciary and fears for freedom of speech under the government of the prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad.**

**THE US attorney general, Janet Reno, ordered a limited review of the assassination of the civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr 30 years ago.**

**A GROUP of Holocaust survivors filed a class-action lawsuit in Newark, New Jersey, against Volkswagen, alleging the German car giant used concentration camp victims as "slave labourers".**

**SEVEN Cuban-Americans were indicted by a federal grand jury for plotting to assassinate the Cuban president, Fidel Castro.** Washington Post, page 16

**A CUBAN airliner burst into flames while taking off in Quito, Ecuador, and ploughed into a football field, killing 79 people, including five children on the ground.**

**SIXTEEN civilians were found guilty of treason in Sierra Leone and sentenced to hang for their part in a coup last May that ousted the elected president, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, and plunged the country into turmoil.**

**A BOMB exploded in rush-hour Tel Aviv, injuring at least 18 people on a busy street near the city's main synagogue.**

**NIGERIA'S electoral commission announced a timetable for democracy, beginning with local council elections on December 5 and culminating in presidential elections on February 27 next year.**

**SOUTH AFRICA welcomed leaders of the 113-nation Non-Aligned Movement for a summit at which they were expected to pursue a bigger share of a shrinking global economy and peace in Congo.**

# Ethnic cataclysm looms in Congo

Victoria Brittain

PRESIDENT Laurent Kabila of Congo has lit the touchpaper of a fire for which all of Africa will pay. The war in former Zaire now involves five other countries directly, and at least five indirectly. But even more serious is Mr Kabila's appeal to the crudest of ethnic politics. It threatens a new genocide dwarfing in horror the 1994 pogroms that killed a million people in Rwanda, mostly from the Tutsi minority.

Last week Mr Kabila called on the Congolese to take up bows and arrows, machetes and spears to kill Tutsis, "otherwise they will make us their slaves". It was an echo of the radio broadcasts in Rwanda that incited the genocide four years ago. In the slums of Congo's capital, Kinshasa, mobs including children have gone on hunts for Tutsis which have ended over beaten or burned bodies.

This is the ethnic politics that gave the continent the epic horrors of apartheid in South Africa, Idi Amin's regime in Uganda, Unita's 20-year war in Angola, the Biafra secession war in Nigeria and the rotting of regimes such as Daniel arap Moi's in Kenya and Mobutu Sese Seko's in Zaire.

Only four African political movements have stood out against tribalism: those of the former president Julius Nyerere in Tanzania; the guerrilla armies led by Yoweri Museveni in Uganda and Paul Kagame in Rwanda; and the African National Congress in South Africa.

Mr Kabila's 15 months in power foundered once he had surrounded himself with government, military and police leaders almost entirely from his own area — Katanga — ignoring the political organisations that had battled against Mobutu's authoritarianism through the Sovereign National Conference of 1990-96.

Mr Kabila has created a regional crisis by turning against President Museveni of Uganda and Vice-President Kagame of Rwanda, the leaders whose armies helped him take power from the dying Mobutu and trained his own army.

Both countries have sent units to lawless eastern Congo on joint operations with Congolese troops against gangs of former Mobutu soldiers, the fighters who took part in the genocide in Rwanda, and the Ugandan rebels from Amin's era, who have been destabilising north-west Rwanda and western Uganda.

Last month Mr Kabila requested that a crack unit of the Rwandan army be stationed in Kinshasa. When this was refused, he angrily demanded that all Rwandans leave Congo, and launched his propaganda war against Tutsis.

But before this rift emerged, Mr Kabila prepared an insurance policy for himself. He secretly trained in Katanga 10,000 of the Rwandan militia who took part in the genocide, and opened links with the Sudanese who back the Ugandan dissidents. With these two groups Mr Kabila was ready to take up Mobutu's old alliances, undermine his former allies and, he believed, consolidate Katangese power.

But Mr Kabila had reckoned without the multi-ethnic Congolese army troops in the east, most of whom promptly changed sides, too, and announced they would join the rebellion against him.

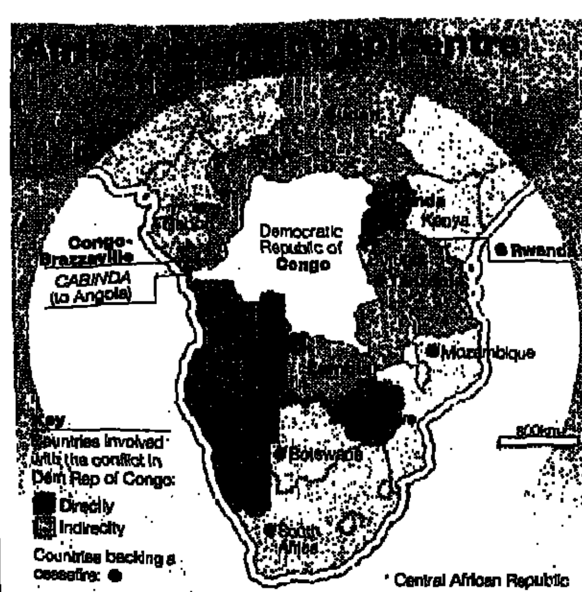
In the vast area of north and south Kivu province, Tutsis have never been granted citizenship. In a repeat of their rebellion three years ago, they are fighting for a Congo that will grant them equal rights. The Congo Democracy Movement is multi-ethnic and promises to end tribal politics and the arbitrary rule that has characterised Mr Kabila's leadership.

The past month's upheaval in eastern Congo, and the rebels' attempt to take the war to the west would probably have succeeded without the intervention of Angola and its heavy artillery and air strikes.

That the Angolans moved so decisively had little to do with Mr Kabila. They were motivated by the opportunity to hit across their border at their own dissident movements: Unita and Flec, the separatist movement in the oil province of Cabinda, surrounded by Congo.

As the jigsaw of alliances fractured in and around Congo, former Mobutu generals and their followers have seized the chance to move out of their safe havens, including refugee camps in Tanzania and the Central African Republic, to join the side they thought most likely to win — initially the rebels. This meant the Angolans saw the rebels as a threat, for many of these generals have been in close alliance with Jonas Savimbi and Unita.

The intervention of Zimbabwe and Namibia alongside Angola to save Mr Kabila reflects a tragic misunderstanding of the situation and an acceptance of Mr Kabila's inflammatory ethnic rhetoric. The internal consequences for both countries are likely to be serious. But one encouraging gesture of the past week came when Tanzania's military training team was airlifted out of Congo by South Africa. President Nelson Mandela has tried in vain to achieve a ceasefire. With Tanzania, South Africa sees only too clearly the ethnic horror threatened by this war.








Helmut Kohl posters go up across Germany in advance of the election on September 27, which pits him against Social Democrat challenger Gerhard Schröder. Unemployment is the biggest issue PHOTO PETER MÜLLER

## Unita thrown out of Angolan government

Agencies in Luanda

THE dominant partner in Angola's government of national unity and reconciliation, the MPLA, on Monday ejected the lesser partner, Unita, citing the latter's failure to disarm. The expulsions represent an enormous setback for Angola's struggling peace process.

Radio announcements said Unita representatives were being suspended from the national assembly and the cabinet "until such a time as their organisation furnishes a clarification of their attitude towards the peace process in Angola". Unita had 70 deputies in parliament; the MPLA has 132. Unita had four ministers and seven vice-ministers.

The assembly president, Roberto de Almeida, said earlier that he had written to the supreme court asking that Unita deputies be suspended from parliament, but had not yet received a reply. The MPLA later cited the constitution as its authority for disbanding the joint government.

Unita has contravened the peace agreement by maintaining an army of around 30,000 men. The movement has also refused to relinquish large tracts of territory to government control. Angolan law states that it is illegal for a political party to maintain an army.

The government was formed in April last year under the 1994 peace accords that ended two decades of civil war between the MPLA and Unita, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola. Unita complained that its members were never consulted by the MPLA-dominated administration.

Fighting is already under way between the two sides in some areas, and the expulsions have raised fears of more serious clashes.

The expulsions come a week after Unita announced that it was breaking off all contact with Portugal, Russia and the United States, the three countries designated as observers in the peace process. The rebel movement accused them of siding with the government.

## Pakistan's PM seeks to impose Sharia law

Suzanne Goldenberg

**PAKISTAN'S prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, last week introduced a bill to replace the country's legal code with the Sharia, or Islamic justice.**

**The Sharia already applies to family law, a legacy of the military dictatorships of the 1980s and an earlier spell in office by Mr Sharif. But the prime minister said such laws, which have been used against women and minorities, fell short of the "true Islamic welfare state" that he envisaged.**

**"Simple changes in laws are not enough," he said. "I want to implement complete Islamic laws where the Koran and the Sunna [the writings of the prophet Mohammed] are supreme."**

**The constitutional amendment would compel bureaucrats to pray five times a day and would introduce tithes in a society where only 2 per cent of citizens pay taxes.**

**But Mr Sharif tried to allay fears of a move towards the extreme version of Islam practised by neighbouring Afghanistan's Taliban militia, by promising to ensure women's rights to education, and to protect minorities.**

**Pakistani liberals immediately condemned the legislation as a transparent attempt to placate Islamic militants who have been staging daily demonstrations against last month's cruise missile attacks by the United States on suspected terrorist bases in Afghanistan.**

**"It's not about Islam — it's about himself," said Asma Jehangir, a lawyer from Lahore and the United Nations rapporteur on human rights. She said the bill was unstoppable because Mr Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League enjoys almost a two-thirds parliamentary majority.**

**Ms Jehangir said the law would give the government sweeping powers to dismantle the upper house, where Mr Sharif's party is less dominant, and to sack bureaucrats and judges whom it views as dangerously independent.**

**Mr Sharif is also accused of letting the economy drift and failing to alleviate widespread hardship inflicted by the sanctions imposed after Pakistan's nuclear test in May.**

## Libya accepts Lockerbie trial

Richard Norton-Taylor

THE Libyan leader, Colonel Muammar Gadafy, said last week that he had no objections to handing over two suspects in the 1988 Lockerbie bombing for trial in the Netherlands, but he demanded assurances there were no "tricks" in the Anglo-American proposal.

Asked in a live CNN television interview from Tripoli whether he thought the Netherlands was a suitable country for a trial, and if he had no objection to the two Libyans being tried by Scottish judges, he replied in English: "Exactly". Libya has previously insisted on an international panel of judges.

But he insisted that sanctions against Libya must be lifted immediately a final agreement on the trial procedures was reached.

He said he had agreed for years that the men — Abdel Basset Ali Mohamed al-Megrahi and Lamen Khalifa Fhimah — could be tried in a third country. But asked if more discussions were needed with the United States and British governments before they were handed over, he said: "Of course Libya is ready to talk directly . . . more details must be clear."



# Turkey will not talk to Kurd rebels

Chris Morris in Ankara

**TURKEY marked the 76th anniversary of its war of independence last Sunday with a new military high command and the swift rejection of a ceasefire offer from Kurdish rebels.**

**In a television interview last week, the leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), Abdullah Ocalan, announced a unilateral ceasefire, to begin on Tuesday.**

**Kurdish sources said it was to coincide with the transfer of power at the top of the Turkish military. The land forces commander, General Huseyin Kivrikoglu, has taken over as the chief of the general staff, making him one of Turkey's most powerful men.**

**The military opposes negotiations with the PKK, after a 14-year war fought with extreme brutality. The PKK is regarded as a terrorist group with little public support.**

**The prime minister, Mesut Yilmaz, dismissed Mr Ocalan's offer of talks and urged the rebel leader to surrender.**

**The PKK has modified its demand for a separate state and says it is prepared to accept a political solution within Turkey's borders.**

**Some European Union MEPs have urged the PKK to call a truce as a gesture of goodwill. But Mr Yilmaz said: "If Ocalan is trying to create a political platform in Europe, his efforts will be in vain."**

**The military insists that the expensive war against the PKK, which has been fought in the mountains in the southeast, is almost over, though clashes have continued.**

**Gen Kivrikoglu said at his inauguration that the struggle against terrorism would continue. But the rise of political Islam is seen as a bigger security threat.**

**There had been suggestions in the media that Gen Kivrikoglu would take a softer line against Islamic radicals, but sources close to the military dismiss these claims.**

**The new chief of staff insisted: "It is our first duty to be vigilant against those who want to introduce Islamic sharia laws and darken the future of our country."**

**There were three military coups in Turkey between 1960 and 1980, but now intervention is a more subtle affair. In 1997 the military forced Turkey's first Islamist-led government out of office, using political and legal pressure.**

**Turkey's Western allies would like to see reform, giving civilians more control over the military. But the generals are unmoved. Since the 1980 coup they have a constitutional mandate to protect the republic from internal threat.**

**● The former Turkish prime minister Necmettin Erbakan and his successor as leader of the Islamist party in parliament, Recai Kutan, were charged last week with defrauding the government of $3.7 million.**

# Africa's poor risk death to reach El Dorado

David Sharrock in Zahara de los Atunes, Spain

THE rich, beautiful and powerful of Spanish society have chosen this wild and windswept corner of the Costa de la Luz, on the Atlantic side of the Rock of Gibraltar, as this summer's place to see and be seen. But by night the beaches play host to a desperate drama as hundreds of poor Moroccans try to reach Europe, often drowning in the attempt.

The worst incident in Spain's summer season of human traffic — when the Straits of Gibraltar are at their calmest and the 20km crossing can be risked in fragile boats known as *pateras* — came in July, when 38 Moroccans drowned.

Outrage erupted when the tragedy was found to have occurred 10 days before it was first reported. The bodies had floated in the open seas before washing up on the Moroccan coastline.

The straits are one of the world's busiest sea routes and yet no one had noticed. The Spanish authorities said they had not intervened because the drownings had happened in Moroccan waters; this in spite of the proximity of Melilla, one of two Spanish territorial enclaves on the North African coast.

A Melillan businessman who went to the aid of the Moroccan navy in his motor boat said that the bodies were so bloated it was almost impossible to pull them out of the sea. Each of the 38 victims would have paid about $1,000 to risk a journey that for many Moroccans represents a lifetime's ambition — to reach the El Dorado they watch daily on the Spanish television channels that can be received in their country.

The Spanish government has launched an inquiry. While the results are awaited, Melilla and Ceuta, the other North African enclave, are becoming fortresses. Double-wire fences, searchlights and observation turrets will make the crossing from Moroccan into Spanish — and hence European Union — territory "impassable" by October, local spokesmen say.

In the meantime the flow of illegal human traffic into the enclaves continues, though at a reduced rate. In the first 10 days of August, more than 600 people were rounded up in Ceuta. Moroccans are sent back immediately.

"While the socio-economic causes of emigration persist, no barrier will prevent the epidemic," a Moroccan government source said. "The financial and security effort being put into sealing the border with Melilla and Ceuta is a waste of money."

Other would-be migrants, including Algerians and sub-Saharan Africans, are "parked" in a former youth camp, where they live for months under canvas waiting to hear if they meet the criteria for admission into Europe.

The Algerians complain that they are victims of the Schengen pan-European frontier treaty, and that the Spanish authorities do not play fair. "My brother wrote to me, telling me that they take you to Algeciras and then they serve you with a Schengen expulsion paper," said Ahmed, who had bribed his way across the Algerian and Moroccan borders to escape the violence in his home town of Oran.

"They say we have no right to be here and then they let you go, giving you 48 hours to leave the Schengen zone. I will join my brother in Spain, if God lets me, but it means that maybe for the rest of my life I will have to hide."

Human traffic across the straits is big business. A recent Spanish report revealed a sophisticated network of routes out of sub-Saharan Africa and along the north African coast.

A journey to the "promised land" from Senegal, Cameroon or Nigeria, via Morocco and a precarious seat in an open boat across the straits, costs about $2,300. Tangier, Ujda and Nador are, according to the Guardia Civil, the principal points of departure, although there are at least 24 known sites along the Moroccan coast.

But it is from Morocco itself, Spain's nearest African neighbour, that the greatest number of aspirant migrants spring. According to market research published by the Moroccan independent weekly newspaper Le Journal, four out of five Moroccans want to cross the straits.

The police intercept, at best, some 15 per cent of the traffic. Just how many drown, or are conned and deposited further along the Moroccan coast, is unknown. The poorer migrants attempt to reach Spain by hiding in fishing boats or in lorries carrying food and other products to Europe — often with deadly consequences.

At Casablanca's port, security has been increased after lorry drivers refused to enter the harbour, such was the risk of discovering a corpse trapped inside the vehicle's container. The bodies of several suffocated children were found in a boat's hold a few weeks ago.

The vast majority of migrants who cross the straits successfully head for France and Germany, but the steady increase in the flow has meant more are staying in Spain. The number of Africans among Spain's official foreign residents has risen, from 2.5 per cent in 1980 to 18.3 per cent two years ago. The true figure is undoubtedly much higher.

From the smart summer and weekend villas of El Escorial in the cooler hills above Madrid, to the parched fruit orchards of Almería and the vast strawberry fields of Huelva, the presence of cheap, illegal African labour is becoming an ever more common sight.

Shunned in the southern coastal resorts, barred from restaurants and nightclubs and even beaten up if they dare to use the beaches, Moroccans have built their own "shebeens", where the prices are more on a par with their meagre earnings.

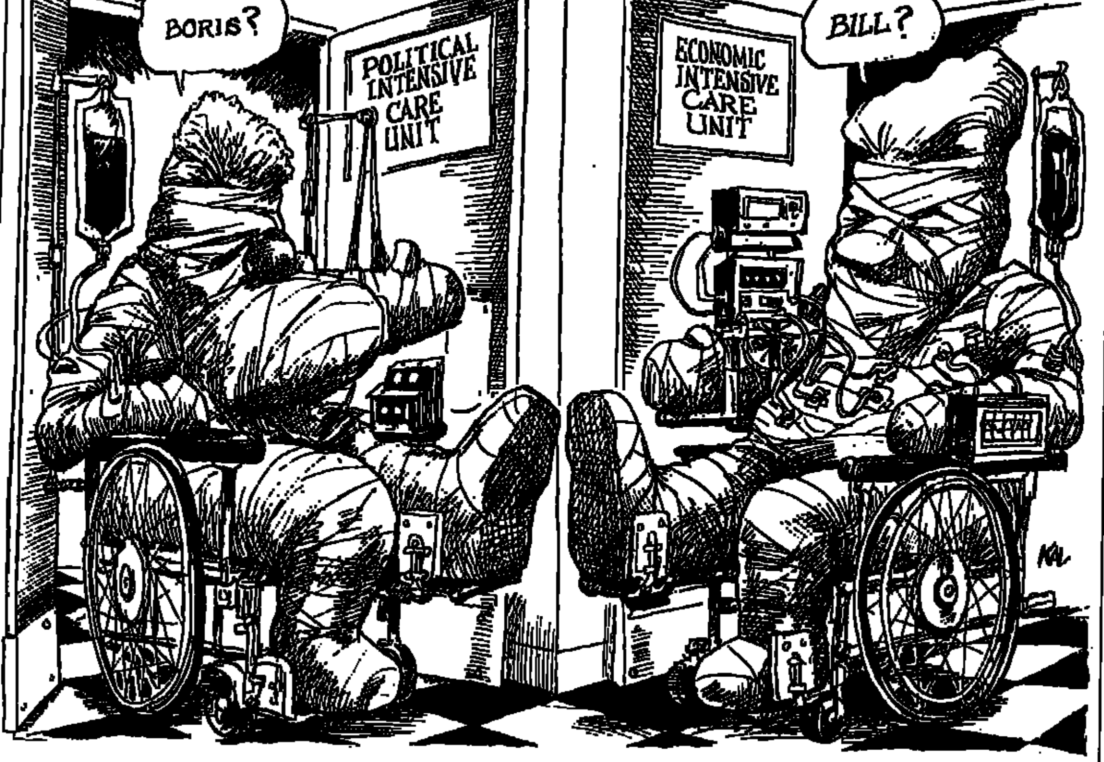
Racially motivated attacks are on the rise in Spain. But no one complains. Life is already much sweeter than it was just 10km across the straits.

SPAIN
Seville
Malaga
Gibraltar
Tangier
Ceuta
Melilla
MOROCCO
80km

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
September 6 1998

# Clinton pinned by media's cruel gaze

WASHINGTON DIARY
**Gary Younge**




WHAT the history books say about President Bill Clinton once he has left the White House will, for the most part, be irrelevant. By the time historians come to evaluate his contributions video footage will be the archive of choice.

Just two clips will suffice. The first will show him wagging his finger determinedly and telling the American public: "I did not have sexual relations with that woman — Ms Lewinsky." The other will be of him cutting an angry figure in the White House Map room as he confessed: "I had a relationship with Ms Lewinsky that was inappropriate . . . It was wrong. I misled the American people. I misled my wife."

His legacy? Clinton the liar, the confessor and the adulterer. The president who played antics with semantics just once too often.

The final word on Clinton's fate is now in the hands of the independent prosecutor, Kenneth Starr, and the next Congress. In the unlikely event that he is impeached, that will be the sum total of his legacy.

Richard Nixon successfully pursued detente with China and stepped up a number of progressive racial and social policies. But our televised memory will be of him standing at the door of a helicopter on the White House lawn and waving — the man who left in disgrace.

If Clinton survives the Congressional probe of the Starr report he will be remembered as the president who — from the primary in New Hampshire to his final days in the White House — simply survived. The man who trod water amid a sea of scandal of his own making, but never reached the shore.

That will, up to a point, be a fair and accurate summary of his time in office. At various stages over the past six years those who have followed him closely have predicted that one of the many scandals that have plagued his administration would cause his ruin. He defied them without actually proving them wrong. And each partial victory slowly chipped away at his credibility, until there is now almost nothing left.

But legacies are unpredictable beasts. They are not, as one would imagine, the aggregate of a politician's work over a definite period of time. They are not even less, more or, God forbid, equal to the sum of the parts that comprise a term of presidential acts. They are instead a collection of images that chime with the public consciousness and are framed by the insecurities of their age, and are then filtered through the smugness of hindsight.

John F Kennedy is not thought of as a philandering yuppie who botched the Bay of Pigs invasion, but as the leader who represented the aspirations of a new generation and was cruelly cut down in his prime.

Ronald Reagan is not remembered — by most Americans — as the man who wrecked the economy and rolled back years of slow advancement for minorities, but the president who led the nation to victory in the cold war.

Clinton's legacy is likely to throw up even more harsh contradictions. Tales of his serial groping and casual infidelity will leave the impression of a misogynist who had little respect for women in the workplace or the bedroom. Yet his initiatives on issues such as childcare provision and the promotion of women to senior posts in cabinet tell a more complicated story. Despite accusations of sexual misconduct (or maybe because of them) he has far stronger support among women than among men.

"In this reactionary climate Clinton passes for something like a bulwark for certain civil liberties and principles that women believe in," Ann Douglas, a Columbia university professor told the New York Times.

Similarly, despite his apparently unrestrainable heterosexual urges, he has invested considerable political capital on reconfiguring the national debate on homosexuality. True he is probably best known for his unholy fudge on the issue of gays in the military and turning his back on gay marriages. But he has skilfully reframed the gay issue as one of civil rights. As a result Americans have turned their attention from whether they approve of gays *per se* (which most of them don't) to whether they approve of discriminating against gays (which most of them don't, either). With the question posed thus it is the Republicans who are now on the back foot.

Conversely, he is admired by African-Americans of all classes who believe that he is the first president in decades who can actually relate to them both as people and as voters. "Mr President you have been my friend and you will always be my friend," said Congressman John Lewis at the recent meeting to mark the 35th anniversary of Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech. "I was with you in the beginning and I will stand with you now till the end."

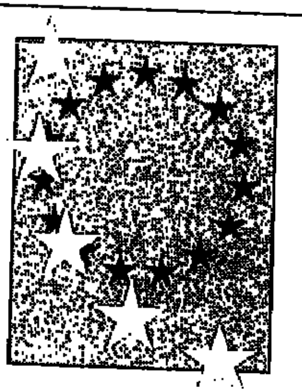
Yet the welfare reforms he implemented were strongly opposed by the Congressional black caucus and have had a disproportionately adverse affect on the black underclass.

Add to this bag of contradictions the booming economy and Clinton's impressive performance on the international stage and, were it not for his scandal-prone ways, history may well have smiled on Clinton as a pragmatic charmer who embodied the bipartisan commonsense policies of his age.

But the baby boomer who has been dreaming of a glowing political obituary ever since his schooldays in Hope, Arkansas, now knows he will not receive the adulation he craves. The man who was marketed as a representative of his age has now become a casualty of it.

Other presidents have had dalliances while in office that were politely overlooked by the White House press corps. But the media are different now. To find most of his predecessors' legacies you will have to reach for heavy tomes by learned historians. To judge Clinton you need only turn on the TV. The verdict of a lifetime of ambition distilled into 30 seconds of footage.

# Money can't buy happiness for Brussels



## Europe this week
Martin Walker

EUROPE finally woke up last week to the scale of the crisis in Russia. With their attention fixed on the launch of the single currency and on the economic recovery in France and Germany, the main European Union countries and the European Commission have insisted now for more than a year that their fortress of prosperity would remain immune from the crisis.

A year ago it was said that South-east Asia's collapse would have "no effect". Then the Japanese crisis was said to have "almost no impact". And until last month the Russian meltdown was said to be "of marginal importance", which at worst might knock one or two-tenths of a per cent off an EU growth rate expected to be almost 3 per cent this year.

But then, as the scale of the Russian catastrophe became clear, somebody looked at a map. And fearing massive new waves of refugees from a bankrupt and starving Russia this winter, the EU has begun to prepare a crash programme of humanitarian aid to feed them in Russia and keep them out of western Europe.

"We can expect a real crisis on this level. Winter time is hard in Russia," the Commission's chief spokesperson, Martine Reicherts, explained. "A lot will depend on just how cold it will be."

The Commission's president, Jacques Santer, instructed the EU's emergency aid agency Echo (European Community Humanitarian Office) to prepare an action plan for food and other aid. But after the emergency aid for the Bangladesh and Chinese floods there is practically nothing left in the Echo budget. Proposals for an increase of the EU's current £500 million budget for humanitarian aid contingencies are expected to be approved by the full Commission this week, and a campaign is already under way to get funds approved in the European Parliament.

The Commission stuck by its assessment that the Russian financial meltdown will have "only a marginal impact" on the EU economies. But the main concern now is of the political and security impact on the European neighbours of a humanitarian disaster in a wrecked state that still controls more than 10,000 nuclear warheads.

Three main priorities have been established by planners in Brussels. The first is to help buttress the political authority of the new Moscow government of Viktor Chernomyrdin in order to ensure that Russia's nuclear weapons remain under control. "This is essentially a Russian problem. But there has to be a Russian government and a parliament that are operational," Reicherts added.

Michel Camdessus, head of the International Monetary Fund, told top US and European officials last week that Russia was apparently without a government. When he spelt out the IMF loan conditions to the new prime minister designate, Chernomyrdin, at their meeting in the Crimea last week, the latter replied: "Yes, but the problem is that I'm not prime minister yet — I hope to get the job on Monday."

The second EU priority is to help organise food and medical aid for the winter, to fend off the prospect of waves of refugees that might otherwise head for the prosperity of Fortress Europe. The third concern is to help the eastern European countries such as Poland, the Baltic states and Hungary, which have begun negotiating their entry into the EU, to withstand the disaster looming in the east. Funds are also being provided to stiffen their border controls.

The sudden panic over Russia distracted attention from another of Europe's looming problems. Turkey could face expulsion from the Council of Europe, after saying it would defy a ground-breaking ruling from the European Court of Human Rights that Ankara should compensate a Greek-Cypriot tourist guide for the loss of her home following the invasion of Cyprus by Turkish troops in 1974.

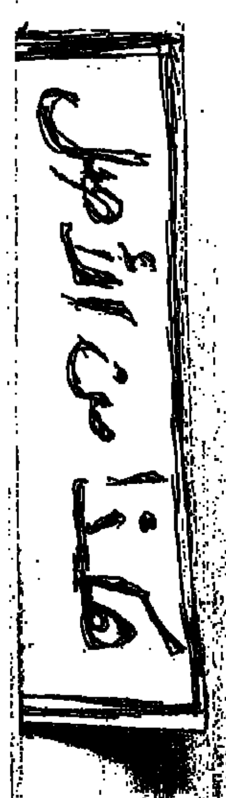
TURKEY, already at loggerheads with the EU for failing to make it a candidate for membership, is now on a collision course with the one European body to which it does belong, just as the United States and Britain are working to lock their fellow Nato member into the European system. Turkey has officially denounced the court's judgment, saying that it "lacks the means of applicability or of implementation". But the committee of ministers of the Council of Europe is legally required to enforce the court's rulings, and the stage is now set for a dramatic confrontation when they meet in Strasbourg on September 14.

Even if the Council tries for political reasons to duck or to defer the issue, the court ruling entitles the plaintiff, Titina Louzidou, to go to any court in Europe and ask for help in enforcing the $900,000 award. Lawyers in Cyprus are now looking at assets they can seize, such as Turkish Airlines property and aircraft. This means a further complication since the government is planning to privatise the airline, and the legal threat could affect the sale price.

The Cyprus attorney general, Alekos Markides, claims that the court ruling was of "historic significance", and after the success of this test case hundreds of other cases are now in the pipeline, and up to 200,000 Greek Cypriots may have legal grounds to join them. On the basis of the award to Ms Louzidou, the eventual compensation bill could exceed $8 billion.

But the political implications of the court judgment outweigh the money, just as the humanitarian and security implications of the Russian meltdown outweigh the usual European concern about what this might do to their growth rates. It is an unusual, but probably salutary, experience for the introspective and prosperous Euro-club to be reminded that there are problems on its doorstep rather more compelling than money.





**The Week in Britain** James Lewis

# Scent of success eludes Yardley as debts pile up

YARDLEY, the oldest and possibly the best-known name in British cosmetics, went into receivership after more than 200 years of trading, with debts of £120 million in spite of annual sales of around £60 million.

Yardley had become a "rather stodgy old brand that appeals to the older customer", said Tony Thompson, an accountant with the receivers, KPMG. But he added that it was "still one of the foremost brands in its market and has a very loyal customer base", and he was confident a buyer could be found.

Boasting a string of royal warrants, Yardley sells in huge volume through outlets such as Boots and Superdrug, but has lacked the financial fire-power to pitch its Tweed, Panache and White Satin perfumes successfully against those of the industry's big players, such as Fabergé, L'Oreal and Calvin Klein.

For the moment, at least, Yardley is pursuing "business as normal". Whoever buys the company, however, will need to have deep pockets to exploit its product range in a competitive global market.

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DEVOLUTION for London moved a step closer with the launch of a blueprint for a new "super-council" with 14 constituencies, an electorate of 350,000 and the country's first elected mayor. The Greater London Assembly is due to be in place by 2000.

The battle for party mayoral nominations is hotting up. Ken Livingstone, MP and former Greater London Council leader, has already published a manifesto, though Labour may not include him on its approved list. Other party probables include the junior transport minister, Glenda Jackson, and Tony Banks, the sports minister. For the Tories, Lord Archer is campaigning hard, though the party would probably prefer someone else.

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THE PRIVATISED national rail system received the most damning condemnation of its performance so far, with a 103 per cent increase in complaints.

A report by the Central Rail Users' Consultative Committee, lambasting many operators for an "appalling" record of delays and cancellations, said conditions on many lines were back to those of the "bad old days" when services were run by British Rail.

Early improvements by the new franchisees had proved to be a false dawn, said the committee. Most complaints arose in the London and Western regions, while the best performance seemed to be in Scotland and the Eastern and Midlands regions of England.

Train operators claimed that the industry was suffering from decades of under-investment, particularly on track and signalling, which are separately controlled.

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FINANCIAL HELP — from personal donors, company sponsorship and a newspaper deal — was provided for a 15-year-old dyslexic "genius" with an IQ of 152 after his parents had failed in their High Court attempt to force Portsmouth city council to provide extra support for his studies at Peterhouse College, Cambridge.

The council had refused to assess Alexander Faludy for special needs even though, it was said, he could write only two legible words a minute and needed special equipment to read and write because he also suffered from dyspraxia, the "clumsy child" syndrome.

Mr Justice Tucker said Portsmouth was right in refusing to top up the boy's university grant from its "special needs" fund because it aided pupils from local authority schools only, whereas Alexander, whose parents are both teachers, had attended a private boarding school. It had, instead, offered help of up to £15,000 from the government-funded Students' Awards system. The Faludys, however, decided to take legal action. It cost the council £10,000 to defend the case, and the Faludys' legal aid was estimated at around £7,000.

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FACED with ridicule during cricket's World Cup next year, not to mention the loss of sponsorship and National Lottery grants, Marylebone Cricket Club (the MCC) is again to ballot its fellows on the admission of women members.

Asked in February whether to end 211 years of happy misogyny, only 56 per cent — well short of the required two-thirds — voted in favour of mixing the sexes at Lord's. This time, members will be sent a glossy brochure to reassure them that women applicants for membership will not be given priority, and that the main bar in the pavilion will remain men-only on match days.






Krishan Radia, aged six, became the youngest person to pass at GCSE when he was awarded a grade C in Information Systems after studying for only four hours a week for five months PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN AR[illegible]

# Rising number of pupils fail exams

**John Carvel**

HEAD teachers warned last week that the education reforms of successive governments were in danger of creating an underclass of non-achievers, left behind as schools improve their ranking in league tables measuring the attainment of more able pupils.

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said he was alarmed by last week's GCSE results showing a sharp increase in the number of candidates failing in the core subjects of maths, English and combined sciences.

There was a further slight increase in entries graded at C or above — broadly equivalent to a pass at the O level exam that made way for the GCSE 10 years ago.

At the top end of the ability scale the proportion getting A* or A grades increased, from 14 to 14.7 per cent. But the number of failures increased from 81,228 to 123,121, and there was no sign that candidates passing with lower grades were improving their performance.

"There is no escaping the fact that the gap between the majority who are achieving very good results and the small minority who have nothing to show for their efforts is growing wider," Mr Hart said.

He blamed school performance tables that were introduced by Conservative ministers and perpetuated by the Labour government. By focusing public attention on schools getting the most A* to C grades, they were discouraging important work to boost the performance at the bottom end of the scale.

"The Government must radically reform the performance tables and its secondary school targets so that they reflect the performance of all pupils. Otherwise they will reinforce failure and increase an education underclass," he said.

David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, is introducing measures to counter what he called the "scandal" of 50,000 pupils leaving school at 16 with no qualifications. As a first step, he stopped pupils who passed their 16th birthday from leaving school at Easter before they had a chance to take their exams. That may have had the perverse effect of increasing the failure rate in the summer by making reluctant candidates sit papers they did not expect to pass.

The next step will be publication of GCSE targets for every school, including passes at A* to C and a points score measuring passes at every grade to remove any incentive for teachers to concentrate on their more able pupils.

The Conservatives seized on the fall in the pass rate to accuse ministers of squandering "the golden legacy" of rising standards inherited from 18 years of Tory rule.

Figures from the exam boards showed the proportion of entries achieving no award rose for only the second time in a decade — from 1.5 to 2.3 per cent, equivalent to about 183,000 entries.

Theresa May, the Tory education spokeswoman, said: "We are worried this could be the first sign the Government is squandering the golden legacy which we left them."

But a government source poured scorn on the criticism. "The only legacy the Tories left was 40 per cent of youngsters not mastering the basic skills of numeracy and literacy by the time they leave primary school."

● In spite of a campaign to attract more people into the profession, the recruitment of trainee teachers specialising in maths is 60 per cent below the Government's target, and there is a shortage of graduates for every subject except history and physical education.

# Adoption guide sets less store on race

**David Brindle**

CHILDREN must not be left to languish in local authority care purely because no family of the same race comes forward to adopt them, councils were told last week.

The new government guidelines on adoption are billed as a tough response to "misguided practices" and unjustified restrictions on adoptive parents on grounds of colour, culture or health.

As well as warning against too great a focus on race, the guidelines say there should be no blanket restrictions on the age of adopters or on allowing smokers to adopt.

However, they fall well short of the kind of harsh crackdown on political correctness in adoption practice that Paul Boateng, the junior health minister responsible, had foreshadowed.

Social services directors and adoption agencies, welcoming the new framework as reasonable, say it will make little difference to the practice in most parts of the country.

Moira Gibb, who chairs the children and families committee of the Association of Directors of Social Services, said her concern was that "it may encourage people to think adoption will be easier".

The guidelines follow a series of cases of people rejected as adopters because they have reportedly been considered the wrong colour, insufficiently conscious of racial issues, or even too fat. Almost 2,300 children are adopted in England each year, about 140 of whom are less than a year old.

Ms Gibb called the guidelines sensible. Recent surveys showed that between 24 and 53 per cent of ethnic minority children adopted had not gone to same-race parents.

Felicity Collier, director of British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering, said a same-race adoption was, in general, the ideal. "For a child, it can be terribly important that the person who brings you up, takes you to school and walks down the street with you actually looks like you."





## In Brief

KENNETH NOYE, Britain's most wanted man and chief suspect in the road rage murder of Stephen Cameron, has been arrested in Spain. After extradition procedures, he could be back in Britain within weeks.

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MEN are turning away from careers as primary school teachers because they fear being branded perverts for working with young children, according to evidence presented to the British Educational Research Association conference in Belfast.

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THE PRINCE of Wales has asked for a meeting with Alex Salmond, the leader of the Scottish National Party over concerns in royal circles that the rise of nationalism could presage the fall of the monarchy in Scotland.

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THE National Union of Students has forced a climbdown by universities planning to levy an administration charge, on top of the £1,000 tuition fee, to cover the cost of collecting the money by instalments.

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ANN MACPHERSON, the widow of a process worker who died of asbestos-related cancer three years ago, has been awarded £110,000 after contracting the same disease from asbestos dust unwittingly brought home by her husband.

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MICHAEL BIRKETT, the vice-consul in Ibiza, has resigned, saying the antics of holidaying Britons make him "ashamed to be British".

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BRITISH AIRWAYS has moved up the world airline table in terms of passengers carried from 10th to eighth place in a table published by Airline Business magazine. The largest passenger carriers were Delta, United and American Airlines.

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BARONESS THATCHER warmed the hearts of Labour strategists when she predicted in Saga, the magazine for older people, that Tony Blair would win the next election.

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THE new Cabinet "enforcer" Jack Cunningham, has cancelled an order for a £15,000 Brazilian mahogany table after environmentalists' criticism that the timber did not come from a sustainable source.

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ANNA LIGHTFOOT, a voluntary worker with Raleigh International, was killed in a remote region of Belize.

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PERCY GRIEVE, the Tory MP for Solihull for 19 years, has died at the age of 83.

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DONALD English, chairman of the World Methodist Council, has died aged 68.

# Blair halts transport reforms

**Keith Harper**

THE Prime Minister has wrecked John Prescott's much-vaunted transport strategy by ruling out legislation to tackle Britain's mounting road and rail problems in the next parliamentary session.

Government sources this week confirmed that Mr Blair had informed the bitterly disappointed Deputy Prime Minister that there will be no action on his transport white paper for at least a year, and no guarantee of legislation in the 1999-2000 session.

Mr Prescott has been fighting a losing battle throughout the year to convince Mr Blair that action to improve Britain's crumbling transport system is not only necessary, but has the support of the public, including both sides of industry. But in spite of his huge parliamentary majority, Mr Blair is unwilling to take any chances that would harm Labour's election prospects.

A government committee is meeting this week to discuss the contents of the Queen's Speech, but transport legislation will not be in it. Government sources stressed that while transport remained an important issue, it would have to take its place in the queue. The crowded legislative programme meant that some sacrifices had to be made.

Mr Prescott is angry because it means that action on an integrated transport policy has been put to the back of the political agenda as road and rail problems grow.

Some of Mr Prescott's colleagues argued that he has become the victim of running too large a department, straddling the environment, transport and the English regions. His department will subsequently be responsible for legislation on local authority reform and the establishment of a new mayor for London. This will bring changes to the operation of London Transport, but action on transport integration has been Mr Prescott's top priority.

Mr Blair's decision means that Mr Prescott will have to deal with an increasingly fraught situation on the railways, without tougher regulation to control the private monopoly, Railtrack, and the train operating companies. At present, his powers to fine companies which default on providing better services to passengers are limited.

The body which could bring about a transformation, the strategic rail authority, requires legislation and might not start operating until 2000 or even later. The political implication is that passengers are unlikely to see any marked improvement in rail services before the next election.

On the roads, Mr Prescott's powers are also limited. The Prime Minister's aversion to alienating the motorist will therefore limit his deputy to the introduction of pilot schemes in several key cities to test whether levying local charges on motorists is a good idea. Anything more controversial, such as motorway tolls, is ruled out completely until after the election.

The pressure on Mr Prescott means that he will have to find alternative methods of dealing with this setback. He has just ordered the rail franchise director, John O'Brien, to act more effectively against rail companies whose services fall below agreed standards. He may also act against the rail regulator, John Swift, whose five-year contract expires in November. Mr Prescott is considering whether to use the regulator as his sacrificial lamb for the Labour party conference this month.

Crowds return to the scene of the car crash in Paris PHOTO: MOUSSE

# Muted mourning for Diana

**Matthew Engel**

AT DIFFERENT times and different places on Monday, the anniversary of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, lurched unsteadily from the sombre to the surreal. Both the Windsor and Spencer families opted for a discreet and apparently contemplative day at Balmoral and Althorp. This approach was emphatically not shared by Mohamed al Fayed.

At the main shrines to Diana's memory — her home at Kensington Palace, her burial site at Althorp and the crash site in Paris — the flowers and messages re-appeared, in a miniature reprise of events a year ago. However, there was little public emotion.

The most self-conscious attempt to re-create that mood came at Harrods. Mr Fayed, the store's owner and father of Diana's lover Dodi, who was killed with her, erected a 3m-high memorial to them both in the shop window.

The general mood, however, was what you expect on a sunny Bank Holiday afternoon. TV crews in Kensington Gardens were alert for anyone weeping, but it was hard going. With a large chunk of London literally *en fête* for the Notting Hill carnival, there was a sense that Diana was being upstaged for the first time since her death.

However, a new and potent shrine has emerged as a place of homage. This is La Flamme de la Liberté, the monument by the Seine above the underpass where the most famous car crash in history occurred. It was erected in 1987 by the International Herald Tribune newspaper, and is meant to symbolise Franco-American amity. But it has now been wholly taken over as a totem for devotees of Diana.

# Woodward warns against trial by television in court

**Janine Gibson**

DRESSED in black and surrounded by journalists, Louise Woodward gave testimony on Monday, not as a convicted criminal but as the first Englishwoman to be tried on live television.

The 20-year-old former au pair, whose trial for the murder of eight-month-old Matthew Eappen became one of the most watched and talked about global TV spectacles of the past 12 months, chose an audience of 900 television executives to warn against the "Americanisation" of British courts and the introduction of court TV.

Speaking at the television festival in Edinburgh, she said: "I would hate to see it go the way it has in the US . . . I think it's inevitable, but I guess I'm just here to say I told you so when it does happen. These are people's lives you're dealing with — this is not a soap opera."

She said the extensive US television coverage had affected her trial: "I was aware there was a lot of performance . . . people were possibly playing up to the cameras at a dramatic moment. I felt I should have taken drama lessons."

Pointing out that she had never been asked whether she wanted cameras at her trial, she said: "I felt it was putting a tremendous stress on everybody . . . my aunt was in the courtroom. She was asked to move because the camera didn't have a good shot of my parents. I'm sure it must have been the same for the Eappen family as well."

The attention, she said, had turned her into a notorious woman. "People don't distinguish between celebrity and notoriety. People do recognise me . . . they are treating me like a minor celebrity, but I'm not famous for anything good."

She remains unconvinced that public opinion swayed the outcome of her trial, perhaps persuading the judge to reduce the conviction from murder to manslaughter.

She felt television viewers were not, for emotive reasons, in a position to be able to decide the outcome of a trial. "Do you really want the public to be policing the courtroom and making those decisions instead of the 12 people? You may as well have an opinion poll on TV."

Miss Woodward and her celebrated lawyer Barry Scheck — who also defended O J Simpson — were taking part in a debate entitled In the Court of Public Opinion.

# Gypsies claim asylum

**Vikram Dodd**

MORE than 600 Gypsies from Slovakia have claimed asylum at British airports in the past month, claiming they have been attacked by skinheads in their homeland.

The figures represent a dramatic rise in the number of Slovaks seeking refuge: in August alone, more than twice as many sought asylum as in the whole of 1997.

Last week there were 108 applications in a single day. Those arriving entered Britain legally and, after being interviewed, were given temporary admission while their claims of persecution were investigated.

According to the Home Office, there were 270 asylum applications from Slovaks in 1997; from January to June this year, there were 215.

From August 1 to August 24, there were 476; on August 24, there were 41, followed by 52 on August 25, and numbers peaked on August 26 at 108.

From January to July there were 160 applications from people arriving from the Czech Republic, compared with 240 throughout 1997.

Last November, the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, said that Britain was not a soft touch for those falsely claiming persecution in the former Czechoslovakia. His statement followed the arrival of 700 Gypsies from the Czech Republic and Slovakia in October 1997 following a local TV programme featuring asylum seekers living on welfare benefits.

In a separate development, London boroughs said they could not cope with an influx of refugees from war-ravaged Kosovo.

Under plans to reform the asylum and immigration system announced by ministers in July, shelter and food would be paid for by a national fund, instead of local councils being liable.

# Rush to pass anti-terrorist bill alarms MPs

**Michael White and Richard Norton-Taylor**

THE Government faced growing disquiet over its anti-terrorism package last week after MPs learned that the contentious bill would not be published until just hours before the Commons was due to meet in special session this week to pass it into law.

With cross-party support promised by William Hague and Paddy Ashdown, there is no doubt that ministers will obtain a majority for legislation to make it easier to convict members of banned organisations such as the Real IRA — and to broaden the scope for criminal charges against groups planning terrorist activities.

Ministers are playing down claims that they have made a concession to would-be rebels in saying the measure will have to be renewed annually, like most emergency legislation. "It would be surprising if it wasn't renewable every year," said one official.

The Irish Parliament was also due to return this week to draw up its own emergency package of measures. But Tony Blair's determination to match Dublin's moves to smash the rump militants of the Real IRA is likely to be achieved at a political price in the Commons and in the Lords on Thursday.

Labour's former Northern Ireland spokesman, Kevin McNamara, confirmed that he is tabling an amendment to enable MPs in all parties who share his doubts to vote against the bill, not least because the law may prove counter-productive by undermining support for the Good Friday agreement and boosting hardliners on both sides.

Labour MPs Harry Barnes, Gerry Bermingham, and even senior loyalists such as Donald Anderson have been voicing concern, as did the Liberal Democrat peer Lord Russell.

Mr McNamara, MP for Hull North, voiced widely shared fears that, in the wake of the Omagh bombing, MPs are being bounced into supporting ill-considered measures. "They are still drawing [the bill] up, operating on the hoof under pressure from one side or another," he said.

The Liberal Democrats' defence spokesman, Menzies Campbell, said there should have been at least a week between publication and legislation.

The "draconian" core of the planned change is to allow conviction on the word of a senior policeman and inferences to be drawn from exercising the right of silence.

One reason for the rush is President Clinton's visit to Ireland this week, though Mr McNamara claimed that United States support for the curbs has been muted because they would breach the US Consitution's Fifth Amendment, against self-incrimination.

The catch-all clause to prevent London-based terrorism affecting other countries will be extended to include conspiracy to engage in any serious offence abroad, Whitehall sources confirmed.

When Mr Blair unveiled details in Omagh, it was scarcely noticed that the Government was seeking to broaden the measure to cover drug trafficking and paedophiles. Ministers have been warned that it will be difficult to prove prosecution claims that conspiracy in Britain — in robberies, for example — is related to foreign terrorist groups.

The Government hopes this approach will deflect criticism that it is concerned only with political opponents of foreign regimes. Mr McNamara said his fears also embraced this clause. "Would people raising money to help the liberation of East Timor or the democratisation of Burma fall foul of it? Those states with big defence contracts with us will be allowed to do what they like. Those who do not will be called nasty and despotic," he predicted.

Ministers insist that safeguards will vitiate such fears, and say the legislation fits in with co-ordinated European Union-wide measures to combat international crime and terrorism.

● About 200 convicted terrorists are expected to be freed within two months under the Good Friday agreement despite unionists' fear that some republicans, once released, might join the Real IRA, as one IRA prisoner freed in the Irish Republic in May is believed to have done. Seventeen paramilitary prisoners, including a murderer, are due to be released next week.

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# Sleight of hand cuts hospital waiting lists

**David Brindle**

MINISTERS last week conjured a statistical sleight of hand as crafty as anything by their Conservative predecessors, to demonstrate that hospital waiting lists in England are falling at a record rate and have plunged 45,000 in three months.

Instead of publishing figures for the quarter to the end of June, in the usual way, the Department of Health produced more favourable data for the four months to the end of July.

Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, went further by ignoring April — when waiting lists rose — in order to show the 45,000 fall over the rest of the four-month period.

The move led to raised eyebrows among health economists that the Government Statistical Service, which prides itself on impartiality, had co-operated with such an unannounced and fundamental change in its data series.

In opposition, Labour repeatedly accused the Tory government of manipulating waiting list figures. But last week Mr Dobson was stressing that Labour left the figures to statisticians, who were free from political influence and would never "fiddle" the results.

As he proclaimed the 45,000 fall, the minister said the figures were "falling faster than at any time in the history of the health service".

The waiting list issue is of paramount importance for Labour because of its "early pledge" to cut by 100,000 the 1.13 million total it inherited. In fact, the total has risen to 1,267,200, having peaked at 1,312,700 at the end of April.

Had the figures been presented in the usual way, a quarterly fall of 10,000 would have been reported, and three of the eight health regions — Northern and Yorkshire, North Thames and West Midlands — would have been shown to have longer queues. By adding July, all regions are shown to have cut their queues and the overall fall over four months is shown to be 30,400.

The four-month figures are being justified the on grounds that ministers henceforth intend to publish monthly waiting list statistics. Calculation of monthly totals is said to have been requested by health service managers, but the Government may also hope it will dilute interest in the statistics.

# Blair loosens union ties with help from individual donors

**Michael White**

TONY Blair has succeeded spectacularly in his drive to end Labour's historic dependency on the trade union chequebook — but at the price of increased debt and dependency on the whim of wealthy individuals, the party's annual report revealed last week.

The high-gloss, reader-friendly report, which will be presented to this month's new-look Labour conference, reveals that Mr Blair entered 10 Downing Street on the back of a record £4.5 million overdraft, after spending £13.7 million on last year's election and £26 million over three years — but less than the embattled Conservative party.

Labour says its debt will be paid off this year — another contrast with the Conservatives, who were £19 million in debt until 1996. As for the unions, they once paid 90 per cent of Labour's bills, a share now down to 30 per cent.

"Membership and small donations" raised 40 per cent of revenue, donations of £1,000-plus brought in 20 per cent and the related "events and sponsorship" a further 10 per cent.

Promptly dubbed the New Labour Establishment, the list of companies or individuals who gave at least £5,000 in money or sponsorship last year includes the actor Jeremy Irons, his wife Sinead Cusack, and pop stars Mick Hucknall and Neil Tennant, as well as heavyweight business leaders such as Gerry Robinson, head of the Granada Group.

Protesters from Trident Ploughshares squat in defiance of security guards inside Faslane's perimeter fence after breaking through in protest at the base's nuclear arsenal PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID MITCHELL

# Trident activists 'breach' Faslane barrier

**TWO peace campaigners, who say that twice in a week they got within metres of a Trident submarine at the Faslane base near Glasgow, swam through naval defences for a third time last weekend, despite increased surveillance, *writes John Vidal*.**

**The Ministry of Defence, having dropped charges against Krista van Veltzen, aged 23, of the Netherlands, and Katri Silvonen, aged 20, of Finland, over the first two incidents, had them detained with a third swimmer, Hannah Jarvinen, aged 21, of Finland, until September 27.**

**Armed with hammers and intending to damage or occupy the nuclear submarine, they say they were within 10 to 20 metres of the nuclear arsenal before the alarm was raised.**

**A few days later, Crista and Katri swam back through the defences, reaching a dock warehouse where the submarines are repaired. They say they could "easily" have boarded the submarine had they had sub-aqua equipment or been trying to evade the authorities.**

**Another activist, Rick Springer, an American, aged 47, said: "Security at Faslane is an illusion. They are highly susceptible to acts of terrorism. Thank God we're not violent."**

**Trident Ploughshares last week filed a legal complaint at Dunbarton Sheriff's court against the Government for "preparation of crimes against humanity". They are hoping to test international law on nuclear weapons.**

# Firm develops needle-free injector

**Jamie Wilson**

A BRITISH firm is carrying out trials of the world's first needle-free injector of vaccines, in what could be good news for the four out of 10 people believed to be terrified of injections.

The device, called Intrajet, contains a small pressurised canister attached to a sealed glass capsule containing the medication.

High pressure jets of air force the vaccine under the skin without patients having to endure the pain caused by a needle.

"This system could potentially be used with any vaccine or hormone, basically anything that at present is delivered in liquid form by a hypodermic syringe," a spokeswoman for manufacturers, Weston Medical, said.

Currently 40 per cent of medicines are delivered using a needle. Intrajet could be on the market by 2001. The system also offers health benefits. It is estimated that in the US alone more than 200,000 people a year suffer injury or infection from hypodermic needles.

The first beneficiaries of the Intrajet system could be sufferers of hepatitis C, the most serious form of the illness and the leading reason for liver transplants.

Weston Medical has signed a potentially large deal for use of the needle-free technology with Swiss company Hoffman-La Roche, which is developing a treatment for the disease.





# CJD discovered in appendix

**James Meikle**

THE Government may be forced to carry out mass screening for the human form of mad cow disease (BSE) following the chance discovery of evidence of the disease in a patient who had his appendix removed during routine surgery.

The man showed no outward signs of the disease at the time but died three years later displaying the appalling symptoms of new-variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease — dementia, aggression and loss of bodily control.

So far it has been impossible to confirm diagnosis of the disease until after death, when the brain is examined. The Government now has the chance to track the exposure of the population to bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in the late 1980s and the risk they were at before potentially infective beef began to be removed from the human food chain.

Ministers have approved a review of thousands of specimens of appendices and tonsils which are routinely kept in hospital laboratories after removal. If they find signs of nv-CJD — which has killed 27 people since 1995 — in just one more sample then mass screening of patients about to have their appendix or tonsils removed will take place.

Researchers are preparing procedures and ethical rules for the initial studies, which will be funded by the Medical Research Council.

If tests on patients are authorised, it is probable they — or parents in the case of children — would be asked for permission. Guidance on whether to tell them the results has still to be considered because the disease is incurable.

The case behind the latest twist in the saga involved Tony Barrett, a coastguard. He had his appendix removed at Torbay hospital, in Devon, in September 1995, eight months before displaying any signs of nv-CJD and nearly three years before he died.

Mr Barrett complained of numbness in his face and right hand in May 1996. In April last year, he was treated for depression and later he became hyperactive and aggressive. This was followed by intermittent deafness, blurred speech and unsteadiness. He died in Derriford hospital, Plymouth, last June.

After his death, doctors examined his appendix and found a rogue protein associated with nv-CJD. Samples from 44,000 appendectomies and 800,000 tonsillectomies carried out each year are routinely kept by hospital laboratories.

The Government's chief medical officer, Sir Kenneth Calman, said there would be no immediate change of health or BSE controls.

But officials are anxious for repeat tests on other appendices "to see what it means. Its significance is not clear. We cannot overstate that."

The testing of previous samples would be done anonymously but if another positive case was discovered, the Government would switch to "pro-active mode" and ask permission to test people's appendices and tonsils before surgery.

However, initial checks may not uncover further examples because of the small number of nv-CJD victims in a population of 50 million.

Individual tests take about two days and involve the use of antibodies to react with the rogue protein. James Ironside, of the CJD Surveillance Unit in Edinburgh and a senior member of the research team, said: "The staining technique is a straightforward method and with appropriate approval and resources, we could start in the next few months."

# Arch-sceptic to blitz drift towards euro

**Peter Hetherington**

**HE MODESTLY calls it a "people's campaign" to halt the Government's headlong rush into a European single currency. But the cost of Paul Sykes's battle to save the pound will be considerably more than the £2 million he spent bankrolling Eurosceptic Tories at the last election. "This is not being done on the back of a fag packet," he laughed.**

**Last week the Yorkshire businessman, who built Sheffield's huge Meadowhall shopping complex, promised the biggest private publicity blitz the country has known in an attempt to force a No vote in any referendum on economic and monetary union. He thinks that this could take place before the next election, "sooner rather than later".**

**The former Barnsley tyre fitter, worth an estimated £250 million, is so convinced that Tony Blair is on a fast track to the euro — which most EU member states will join on January 1 — that he has scheduled a lavish launch of a "Britain says No" campaign for the new year.**

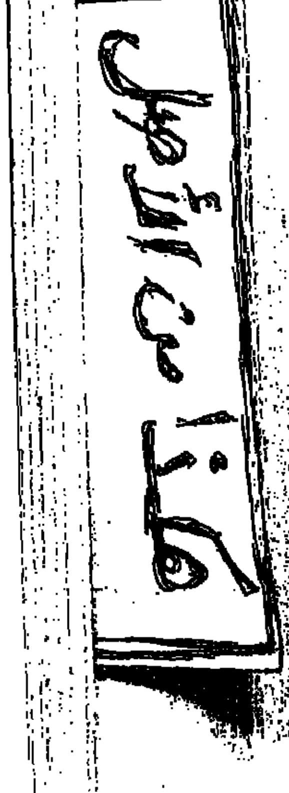
**Newspaper and television advertisements, leaflet drops, public meetings and videos could all be used to drive home the message that British democracy faces its most grave threat. An Internet service provider he owns would also spread the message.**

**Since quitting the Tories two years ago in protest at John Major's equivocation over Europe, Mr Sykes has been quietly making contact with fellow sceptics, from business and the trade unions, to mount what will effectively become the only substantial opposition to a government-funded Yes campaign in a referendum.**

**He said he had drawn together economists from the 15 member states, and constitutional specialists, to drive home his message. "If we give up our currency, that is the end of our independence."**

**He quoted the head of the Bundesbank. "He said it is an illusion to think states can hold on to their autonomous taxation policies. He's not some scribbler; he's the boss. And that says it all."**





# Russia must rally to save rouble

THE scale of the economic and political disaster that threatens Russia is such that it demands an unprecedented effort by the international community. At stake may well be not only Russia's future stability, but the global economy itself, for a crash in Russia can hardly be confined in its effects to that country alone. It is true that Russia is not in the technical sense a critical part of the world economy. But if another large segment of humanity were to pass into economic darkness, the sense that things are out of control would massively feed the panic urges which can have such a devastating effect on international economic life. That Russia has in effect defaulted on its debts makes this even more likely. A decisive battle against these forces of panic and fear has to be fought somewhere, and the place for that fight, it can be strongly argued, is Russia. What is to be done? Should the top industrialised economies back the rouble to the hilt, putting in all of the money needed — it could well be a huge amount — to make the Russian currency real again? In return, and without conditions or backsliding, the economic reforms that Russian governments have constantly postponed, with the Duma undermining what efforts there have been, must be enacted and applied. This applies, above all, to tax. It is true that this would be yet another version of a deal that has failed twice already but this time, the argument goes, both sides would really deliver.

It is the tax crisis of the government that has led to the fall of the rouble. Russia's money would be reasonably sound were it not for the fact that creditors could see that the government's income from its increasingly paltry tax receipts could not service its debts for much longer. That set off a flight of investors, which in turn produced an atmosphere in which everybody decided the rouble could no longer be trusted. The tax failure is a product of the central political contradiction of Boris Yeltsin's Russia, which is that the government is beholden to, and manipulated by, the very groups which it must discipline if it is to achieve stability. The new corporate and financial class in Russia does not like paying taxes, and it regards efforts at reform as acceptable only if they incorporate yet more ways for it to make money.

The return of Viktor Chernomyrdin as prime minister brings to power a man notoriously unready in the past to challenge the irresponsible centres of economic power in Russia. Indeed, he was part of them. But it is not impossible that he could lead the belated conversion of that class to the view that Russia's interests must for a time take precedence over its own, if only because a general collapse threatens it as well. That, anyway, is the gamble we may well have to take. He would need also to create a government of national emergency incorporating all the major parties, so that the legislature would not again cripple policy.

It took a long time to turn the rouble into real money. But in spite of all the disasters, difficulties, and upsets of the Russian economy in the 1990s, it was gradually happening. Russians were beginning to buy, save and invest in their own currency. Overnight, the rouble has been demolished. It has to be restored. The danger in a grand rescue plan is that the money would be spent, but the rouble would continue to slide and the reforms would be still-born. What ought to make the difference this time is determination. This is in part a function of the seriousness of the situation, and there ought to be no doubt, inside or outside Russia, how truly serious this situation is.

# Australia faces critical challenge

THE Australian government has been between a rock and the proverbial hard place since Pauline Hanson's One Nation party took a quarter of the vote in the Queensland elections in June. Her success in Queensland, and her general appeal across the country, as attested in opinion polls, revealed that the number of Australians who no longer trust or believe the established parties was far larger than mainstream politicians had imagined. Her simplistic messages on race and the economy and her rejection of the multicultural principles that have prevailed in Australia for 25 years threatened both the ruling conservative coalition of the Liberal and National parties, and the Labor opposition. One Nation took votes from both sides of the political street, but the greater danger was to the conservative parties, who saw that Hanson might deprive them of victory in the general election they had by law to call between now and next summer. The dilemma of John Howard, the Liberal prime minister, has been a difficult one. He could go to the voters early, when Hanson's appeal would still be fresh, but Australia's economic situation, inexorably weakening under the impact of the Asian crisis, would still be relatively favourable. Or he could go later, when Ms Hanson might have peaked, but the economic picture could be dire. He has plumped for the first option.

This will be Australia's most important election for many years. No doubt the prime minister hopes that the argument that it is better to have the right than the left in power in difficult economic times will be convincing. On the other hand, he has stacked the odds against himself by insisting on going to the country with a plan for value added tax which is deeply unpopular and which has lost his party one recent general election. But which of the major parties wins is less important than how strongly the voters ensconce One Nation in the Senate, where Mrs Hanson's party might well end up holding the balance of power, and the Lower House, where it is just conceivable it could do the same. The whole tone and direction of Australian politics would be altered by such a result. On the other hand, if One Nation achieves only limited success, that would be a welcome victory for liberal values.

But even this better outcome would not fully resolve the political crisis, which is the product of a long parting of the ways between the country's élite and a large section of the population. Over the past quarter of a century the Australian élite has pursued a dual programme of neo-liberal economic changes and of new directions in international and cultural policy. A strong attachment to Asia, evident both in an opening up of the country to Asian immigration and in the celebration of ethnic difference within Australia, has emerged. So has a different approach to black Australians, one more aware of past offences by whites and more open to Aboriginal claims, including those on land. Some Australians feel as threatened by these economic change as they are perplexed by the cultural shifts. They wonder what has happened to "their" Australia in the busy world of multicultural politics, food and fashion. Whether they direct the bulk of their votes to One Nation, or give them to the established parties now promising to make up for past arrogance, is the most critical question that Australia has faced for decades.

# Test for the US

IF Sudan wants a serious inquiry into whether or not the Shifa pharmaceutical factory was also producing precursors for chemical weapons, it should get one. The Sudanese authorities maintain it was an innocent aspirin plant; the United States says it has compelling evidence it was not. If the Sudanese think they can prove that the factory had no covert purposes, they should be given a chance to do so. If indeed it had not, large political, legal and financial consequences would follow. The chances that there will be such an inquiry are, however, slender. The Security Council last week shrugged off the Sudanese request for an official United Nations inquiry, bowing to the US line that it would be pointless. Yet it surely does matter that where an action as cavalier as the destruction in peace time of a multimillion-dollar plant by cruise missile takes place, it should be demonstrated as conclusively as possible that the action was justified. That is especially the case when it could so easily have caused fatalities. If the Sudanese were to accept that experts could do their work without any hindrance, there seems no good reason to ignore their request.

That it is not being seriously considered attests to the deterioration of international standards. A unilateral attack across international boundaries is in itself a departure from such standards. Saying that Washington's privately held evidence should be accepted as sufficient justification for it, even where the government of the country attacked is demanding an inquiry, is another. This does not mean that the Sudanese government is an innocent. It is a bad government that seized power in a military coup, which has tried to impose a fundamentalist way of life not accepted even by a majority of the country's northern population and which is resisted furiously by the non-Muslims of the south. It has played dubious games internationally. It could have been playing even more dangerous games by working on nerve gas for the Iraqis. If the Sudanese tried to cheat a properly constituted inquiry, that would tell its tale. But what if the US got it wrong? Surely it is worth some international effort to find out.



# Sorting out terrorists from freedom fighters

Richard Norton-Taylor

SCEPTICS could be forgiven for treating Tony Blair's decision to recall Parliament this week to rush through new anti-terrorism laws as little more than a political gesture. A show of solidarity with the victims of the Omagh outrage and with the Irish government, certainly. But essentially a question of being seen to be doing something in the wake of a terrorist atrocity in Britain's backyard.

After all, most of the measures the Irish government has said it will introduce are already enshrined in Britain's Prevention of Terrorism Act and the 1996 PTA (Additional Powers Act) which gives the police wide-ranging powers to arrest, detain, question, stop and search.

It is already an offence under the PTA to fail to disclose information likely to be of assistance in preventing an act of terrorism or in securing the arrest of a terrorist. It is also an offence to collect information that might be useful to terrorists.

The Government now wants to add to this panoply an offence whereby courts could treat silence or refusal to answer questions as corroboration of police claims that the suspect belongs to an illegal organisation. In effect, the accused could be convicted on a sworn statement by a senior police officer.

The police and security services say they know the leaders of the Real IRA, responsible for the Omagh bombing, just as they knew the identity of the IRA leadership. The difficulty has been turning intelligence into hard evidence usable in court.

**The plan is to catch those funding, inciting or conspiring in terrorist acts abroad**

One of the main sources of intelligence is telephone tapping — Northern Ireland is pretty well tapped. The Secret Service and the Royal Ulster Constabulary have been pressing the Government for years to allow the product of telephone taps to be used in court — a move rejected by the British Home Office on the spurious grounds that it would reveal the operational methods of the security and intelligence agencies.

Whether abandoning the normal rules of evidence in the way the Government now plans leads to any safe conviction remains to be seen. What is clear is that, encouraged by popular revulsion and demonstrations against the Real IRA, whose membership is estimated at fewer than 100, the Government apparently believes its proposed new law will be sustainable in court as well as welcome politically.

It certainly believes it is easier to legislate against Irish-based terrorists than spokesmen of militant Islamic groups based in Britain who have endorsed the bombing of the United States embassies in Kenya and Tanzania and are also likely to be in MPs' firing line this week.

Proposals to replace the PTA — introduced after the 1974 Birmingham pub bombing and still officially a "temporary" measure — with permanent legislation aimed at international, as well as Irish-based, terrorism were due to be tabled this week. They were originally supposed to have been announced last January, and the delay reflects the Government's concern that it is entering a political and legal minefield.

The plan is to catch individuals based in Britain who are funding, inciting, or conspiring in terrorist acts abroad. According to Lord Lloyd, the former law lord asked by the Government to draw up proposals for the new legislation, terrorism should be defined as "the use of serious violence against persons or property, or the threat to use such violence to intimidate or coerce a government, the public or any section of the public, in order to promote political, social or ideological objectives".

The cliché, though no less true for that, that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter comes to mind. Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress, described by Margaret Thatcher as a terrorist organisation, would have been caught under such a definition. It is a recipe for cherry-picking terrorists, according to political and diplomatic pressures rather than consistency under the law.

A new law might be used against dissidents who intimidate the Saudi royal family, on whom lucrative British arms exports depend, but presumably would not catch Iraqi dissidents funded by the CIA or Britain's MI6 to topple Saddam Hussein. In an astonishing example of deceitful diplomacy, it has emerged that, while publicly insisting on unrestricted access for United Nations inspectors, the Clinton administration secretly told them to back off. "Maybe if more evidence of nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons were found, the requisite response would be just too difficult, politically, diplomatically and militarily," commented the the Washington Post, which broke the story (*see page 16*).

It may not be long before the Libyan leader, Colonel Muammar Gadafy, once derided as the world's most dangerous perpetrator of state terrorism but no friend of Islamic fundamentalist groups, is brought back into the Western fold. British Aerospace, which has admitted holding secret talks with an intermediary acting for Libya with an eye on juicy contracts, seems to think so.

Too often the US and Britain have fallen into the trap of demonising, and thus glamorising, individuals — Osama bin Laden is the latest example — who are rarely, if ever, brought to book. Far better to apply the rule of good domestic and international law consistently, without fear or favour, based on hard evidence. Or even, heaven forbid, to address the causes of politically or ideologically motivated violence.



Le Monde



# China swept up in a flood of patriotism

Frédéric Bobin in Beijing

IS CHINA at war? One might be forgiven for thinking so after reading the papers, watching television or visiting the industrial cities on the "front line" of the floods that have swept the country over the past two months. The disaster has given the regime an opportunity to muster the kind of patriotic sentiment that one would expect in the case of a major conflict. According to the official media, the People's Liberation Army has not been deployed as extensively since 1949.

Such is the peril now threatening China that President Jiang Zemin has just announced that he will have to postpone his trip to Japan and Russia, which had been planned for early September. "The situation is worsening," he said in an attempt to justify his role as brave captain of a typhoon-battered ship.

Whole swathes of countryside have indeed been devastated. But the authorities have blatantly dramatised the situation, which remains more than a little confused. The official Chinese media usually say little about natural disasters, but in the past few weeks they have treated the population to a flurry of reports on floods caused by the Yangtze and Songhua rivers.

Every evening state television devotes most of its news to pictures of torrential downpours, ravaged dikes and flooded villages. The screen is swamped by images of plucky soldiers bent double beneath sandbags. The people omitted from this truncated picture are the villagers themselves. Nothing is shown of their daily sufferings, nor is anything known of the true casualty figures — officially 4,000 have died, but the figure could be 10 or even 20 times higher.

The silence that shrouds the fate of stricken and often inaccessible villages contrasts with the deafening publicity given to allegedly imperilled industrial cities. The front pages of leading dailies are full of forecasts that record flood levels are about to hit Wuhan or Harbin, all couched in language more appropriate to a report on the Olympic Games.



Chinese soldiers build a new dike along the Songhua river to prevent floods inundating the northeastern city of Harbin in the biggest mobilisation of the army since 1949 PHOTOGRAPH KELVIN SZETO

But as each new peak in water levels is announced, reporters actually on the spot in the affected cities remain dubious about the true nature of the impending peril. Local people go about their daily tasks as usual, anxious but not panicky. The city dikes have held fast.

Such orchestrated gloom and doom is by no means ingenuous: it aims to exalt both the protective role of the army, that last bulwark of a besieged fatherland, and the clear-sighted concern of the Communist party. The authorities want to rehabilitate themselves in the eyes of the inhabitants of industrial centres that have been hard hit by massive redundancies in state enterprises.

Faced with endemic social unrest, which is all the more worrying because it has hit industrial workers who used to be the aristocrats of the regime, the government has used the floods crisis as a pretext for reactivating party cadre networks that have lain dormant since Mao Zedong's time.

Patrolling militia, "labour units" in the breach, red-draped lorries sweeping through the streets — the whole atmosphere is irresistibly reminiscent of other political "campaigns".

More generally, however, what is being stoked is Chinese nationalism. China Daily said the floods have "united the nation": they may have swept dikes away and taken lives, but they cannot break the "great wall" of Chinese determination.

Popular feeling has been whipped up to fever pitch. Television has been organising shows to raise money for disaster victims in the manner of the West's humanitarian campaigns to help starving Africans in the eighties.

Chinese pop stars celebrate the struggle against the floods. Showbiz and political personalities have been mobilised in Hong Kong too. It is no coincidence that in Beijing students and women have demonstrated against the violence suffered by ethnic Chinese in Indonesia.

This upsurge of patriotic fervour has been used by the authorities to paper over such problems as unemployment and corruption. But they also realise that if they blow too hard on the embers there may be a conflagration: one of the driving forces behind the Tiananmen Square demonstration of 1989 was patriotism.

(August 27)

# Indonesia struggles to emerge from crisis

Jean-Claude Pomonti in Jakarta

THREE months after succeeding Suharto as president of Indonesia, Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie has a number of feathers in his cap: almost all is quiet, even on university campuses; a fourth agreement with the International Monetary Fund was signed in July; he has taken over control of Golkar, the ruling party; and a parliamentary session in November should bring in legislation that will allow general and presidential elections to be held in 1999.

Yet, despite earning praise even from his opponents, Habibie has so far only half-succeeded in extricating the country from the "new order" imposed on it by Suharto.

"Good intentions and the means to carry them out are two different things," says Kwik Kian Gie, an economist close to Megawati Sukarnoputri, a popular opposition figure and daughter of the late president Sukarno.

Habibie's first official task was to combat "nepotism, collusion and corruption" — the chief demand of the students who spearheaded the "Jakarta May". It is to the new administration's credit that political prisoners are gradually being freed, that negotiations on East Timor's future have started, and that political activity has been liberalised with the provisional registering of no fewer than 57 parties.

Habibie's second task was the renewal of the government. Twenty of its 32 members used to work with Suharto. There seem to be no plans to wean the civil service or the army from Golkar's control.

The greatest threat to the credibility of the new government remains the social impact of the economic crisis. There has been a 15 per cent drop in economic activity in 1998; unemployment is expected to rise to 17 per cent by the end of the year; inflation is now running at 60 per cent; the banking sector lies in ruins; private foreign debt stands at $80 billion, and public debt at $53 billion.

Only two out of three children went back to school in July. Almost 50 per cent of Indonesians now live below the poverty line. Shantytowns are expanding. Although supplies of basic foodstuffs are guaranteed by the authorities, some people can no longer afford to buy them.

Meanwhile Habibie has to face the problem of Indonesia's murky past. On August 24 the Indonesian Human Rights Commission revealed that when the army put down a separatist movement in Aceh, in western Sumatra, in the early nineties, at least 781 civilians were killed and 163 disappeared. It also called for an inquiry into the atrocities committed in East Timor when Jakarta occupied it in 1975.

Crucial questions are also being asked about more recent behaviour by the army. Did officers encourage or even organise the riots that left hundreds dead in Jakarta in mid-May? Why did the army not step in to restrain looters?

The army's chief of staff has already responded by sentencing officers implicated in the murder of four students on May 12.

On August 15 Habibie expressed his "profound regret" and stressed the need for an inquiry "so the self-respect and honour of our army can be restored". Official investigations to find out if the army had a hand in the organisation of anti-Chinese riots in May have begun. Jakarta has also announced it is to begin withdrawing fighting units from East Timor and Aceh.

But pressure on the army is unlikely to let up. Nine mass graves have been located in Aceh alone. Politicians want to abolish the 75 seats out of 500 that the army occupies in parliament and to end the military's "dual function" as defender of the country both from external enemies and from internal threats.

For several years it was assumed that the army would lay down the law in the post-Suharto era. Instead, it has had to try to repair its badly dented image and shed its less wholesome elements. Top military officers appear to have decided that the best tactic is to keep their heads down and wait for the storm to blow over. For the moment, in any case, they have little alternative.

(August 23-24 and 26)

# Castro given neighbourly welcome

Jean-Michel Caroit in Santo Domingo

**THE Cuban president, Fidel Castro, was invited last week as an observer to a summit meeting of the 16-nation Caribbean grouping, Cariforum, in Santo Domingo, capital of the Dominican Republic.**

**True to form, the Lider Maximo concluded his five-day visit, in which he emerged as the patriarch of Caribbean unity, with a speech of more than five hours. "Men die but peoples are immortal," he proclaimed, before deriding "the fools" who thought that the Cuban revolution would not outlive his death.**

**Castro was clearly both moved and satisfied by the trip: moved because he was at last able to visit the Caribbean island that most resembles Cuba in its culture and racial makeup; and satisfied to meet many old friends again — cold war revolutionaries and guerrillas — who long used Cuba as a sanctuary and a base.**

**"All my life I've dreamt of coming to Santo Domingo," Castro said on his arrival. "You're at home here," the Dominican president, Leonel Fernandez, replied.**

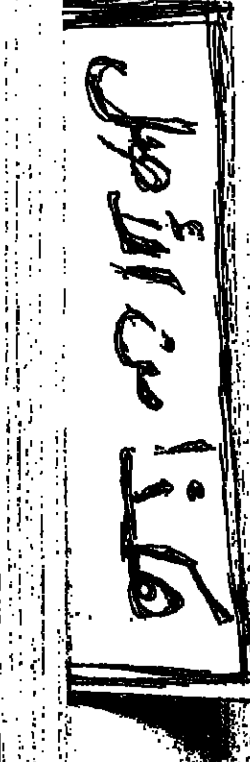
**During the inevitable exchange of decorations, Fernandez stressed that Castro's visit "fulfilled the desires of a whole generation". "Dr Fidel Castro Ruz is a living historic force that has channelled the aspirations of millions for justice and well-being, not only in Latin America but in the rest of the Third World," he said.**

**Castro visited two former Dominican presidents, Joaquin Balaguer and Juan Bosch. Balaguer conducted a ruthless and bloody war against Castroist revolutionaries in the sixties and seventies. The two *caudillos* exchanged memories and pleasantries for almost an hour. The 91-year-old Balaguer confessed that he admired Castro.**

**At Bani, a small town 60km west of Santo Domingo, several thousand admirers waving Cuban and Dominican flags gave Castro a hero's welcome. He had come to pay tribute to the memory of General Maximo Gomez, who symbolises friendship between the two countries. The Bani-born Gomez headed the Cuban rebel movement during the war of independence against Spain at the turn of the century.**

**Castro's visit, which was preceded by threats on his life from groups of Cuban exiles in Miami, was surrounded by very tight security. This caused a number of spats with the press. The Cuban leader was accompanied by a delegation of 600 people, most of them security agents. As one of Fernandez's advisers put it: "The Cubans did not fully trust the Dominican security men, who were trained by the Americans."**

**(August 26)**



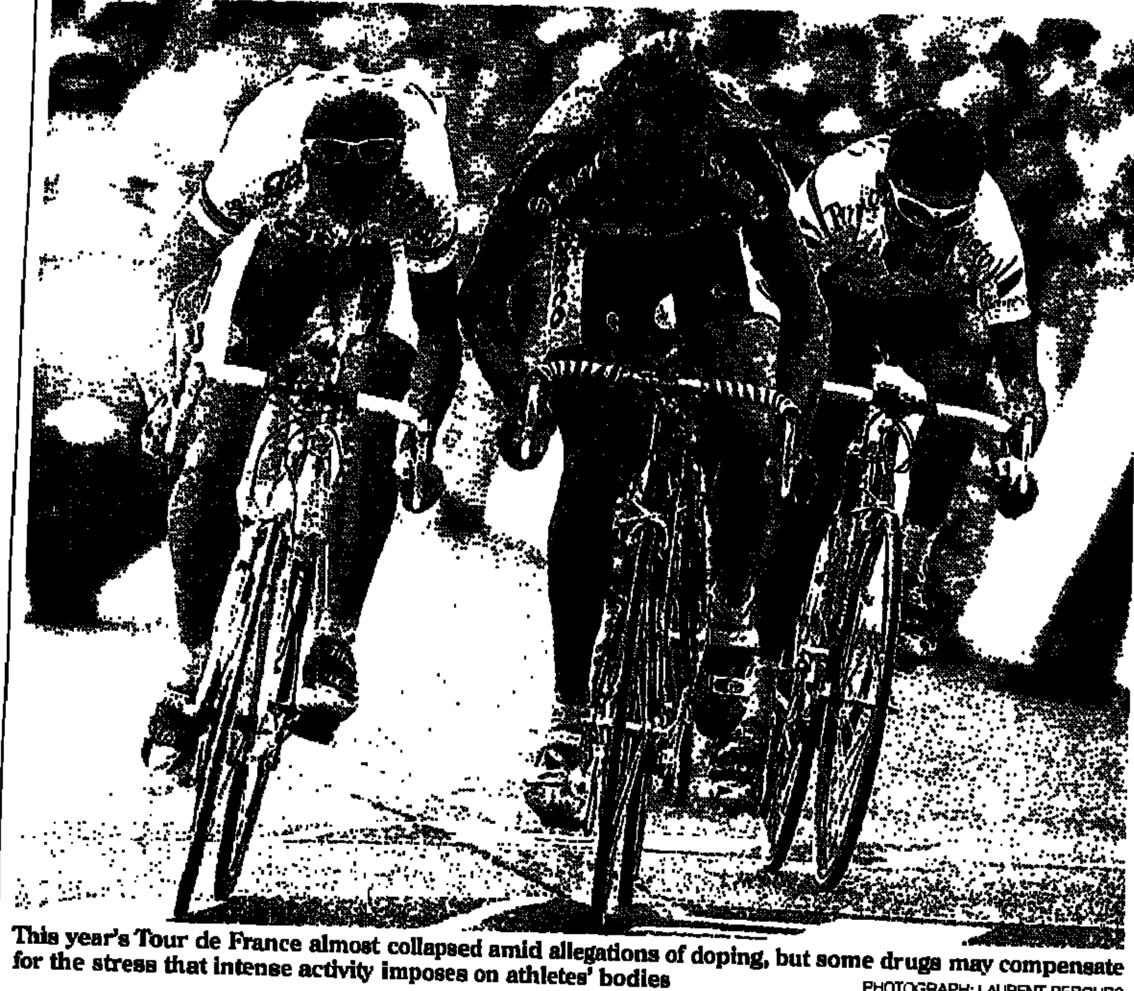
# A balanced approach to drugs and sport

The endocrinologist Bruno de Lignières tells **Jean-Yves Nau** how drugs can be beneficial to professional athletes

**TEN YEARS ago, during the Ben Johnson doping scandal, you caused an outcry when you advocated restoring the metabolic stability of athletes by giving them supplementary hormones. How do you see the problem today, after all the fuss over the doping of Tour de France cyclists?**

At the end of the eighties, when no one really knew what actually constituted doping, I and several colleagues asked the French National Ethics Committee for the Life Sciences and Health to give a definition of what it regarded as unacceptable drug-taking.

Three years later, the committee admitted that high-level sport posed serious medical problems, quite apart from the practice of doping, and that a doctor facing such problems had a duty to act, but then said it would need to be investigated. Nothing has since been done. Its members also admitted that excessive physical activity caused hormonal imbalance, but rejected the principle of restoring the balance, saying it was the responsibility of sports doctors to curb athletes' physical activity in order to maintain their physiological equilibrium.



This year's Tour de France almost collapsed amid allegations of doping, but some drugs may compensate for the stress that intense activity imposes on athletes' bodies PHOTOGRAPH: LAURENT REBOURS

**Are you convinced that the present biological tests against drug-taking are ineffectual?**

Yes, I am. Such tests enable top athletes to consume androgens, erythropoietin, human growth hormones, steroids and all the rest. The only advantage of the tests is that they probably curb excessive consumption and prevent accidents. The moment you fix the acceptable haematocrit [red blood cell count] for cyclists at 50 per cent, everyone will want to aim for 49 per cent rather than 45 per cent.

**Does the medical community have scientific proof that excessive physical exercise is harmful?**

Yes. Medical knowledge in this area is unequivocal. Yet the public is convinced that all physical activity is good for the health, and that medical problems are only caused by drug-taking.

Those medical problems almost always arise from athletes' physical activity. One should not be afraid to say that drugs, as they are administered today — perhaps by "dishonest" doctors, but who are often good technicians, since there haven't been any serious accidents — actually improve athletes' health.

**How do you justify such a provocative stance?**

The problem of drug-taking is never clearly explained to those who watch sports events. It is important to remember that intense physical activity over a long period causes biological disorders, particularly hormonal disorders, that are harmful to health. The trouble is that professional sportsmen and women are constantly forced to push their bodies to the limit, and harm their health, if they wish to stay in the game.

When women athletes, for example, train or compete, they lose the hormonal activity of their ovaries and stop having periods. Their blood vessels and bones also age more quickly. That explains why they have the bodies of post-menopausal women.

Is it so wrong that they should seek a medical solution? An ovarian hormonal deficiency caused by sporting activity can be compensated for by routine forms of treatment such as contraceptive pills or post-menopausal HRT.

Ninety-nine per cent of gynaecologists and endocrinologists worldwide believe this is the only way to improve the health of such women. Is it a bad or a good thing if it enhances their physical performance?

Most doctors think the medical issue is more important than the sporting one. They know that analysis of the benefits and risks involved shows that sportswomen should be given extra hormones. It would unrealistic to try to ban such usage.

**Does the same argument hold for men?**

They too have hormonal problems, but to a less spectacular degree. Studies have shown that the production of testosterone by the testicles falls in the case of exaggerated or prolonged physical activity. This affects the muscles, the cardiovascular system, the bones and the haematocrit, which tends to fall.

An honest doctor should keep the patient informed and under close supervision. If there's a disorder such as a fall in testosterone, should the doctor order the patient to rest and refuse to prescribe a replacement dose of testosterone? Surely it can't be right to refuse such treatment when comparable treatment for women is tolerated. Testosterone presents no particular risk to men's health.

**Does the same argument apply in the case of erythropoietin?**

No one yet seems to have evaluated the medical consequences of its use, which is apparently widespread to judge from the Tour de France. The question is: is erythropoietin chiefly administered in doses that keep the haematocrit within the upper limits of what is normal — which would be good for the health, undetectable by tests, and identical in its effect to, say, a stay at high altitude? Or is it used so that athletes overdo it when competing, which would be bad for their health and immediately detectable?

If such a substance enhances performance but is bad for the health, everyone agrees it would be a good idea to try to ban it. But if a product improves an athlete's performance and his health — and is also undetectable — you'll never get professional sports people to promise not to use it.

Even the president of the International Olympic Committee [Juan Antonio Samaranch], an outspoken critic of drug-taking, has admitted that erythropoietin cannot be effectively banned and should no longer feature on the long list of "doping" products.

(August 22)

# Pacific overture to the world

**Florence de Changy in Honiara**

THE Solomon Islands, which this year celebrates 20 years of independence, is an unfriendly place at sunset, when the mosquitoes come out in force: each year malaria kills more than 300 of the islands' 390,000 inhabitants.

The country, an archipelago of 21 mountainous islands and countless islets in the southwest Pacific, has tenuous ties to the outside world. For example, it has no national television channel.

But the government is gently beginning to think of exploiting new resources. "We've been running the country ourselves for 20 years now. It's about time we got down to serious business," Fred Fono, the planning minister, said recently.

The tourist industry, though still in its infancy, has an undoubted future. Quite apart from some magnificent sites of natural beauty and a largely tribal way of life, the islands form an exceptional open-air war museum.

At the end of 1942 one of the fiercest battles of the second world war took place there. On the island of Guadalcanal, extraordinary relics can be visited by scuba divers — the United States destroyer Aaron Ward, complete with its officers' porcelain crockery, a Japanese submarine, and a hydroplane.

Much deeper lies the imposing wreck of the Japanese cargo boat, Azumassan Maru, now home to tuna, sharks and barracudas. In all, 55 wrecked warships rest in the clear warm waters off Guadalcanal.

Another source of income for the Solomon Islands will be several recently discovered gold and diamond mines, vindicating Alvaro de Mendana, who was convinced in 1568 that he had discovered the source of King Solomon's great wealth.

Independence celebrations have been modest because the Solomon Islands is a poor country that needs to feed a growing population. The coalition government elected a year ago and led by prime minister Bartholomew Ulufa'alu is also having to face the repercussions of the Asian crisis, which badly affected the timber trade, until last year the country's main source of income.

That slowdown may be worrying in the short term, but should eventually prove to be a boon. Within the space of a few years the Solomon Islands has been extensively deforested by greedy Asian lumber firms, most of them Malaysian.

(August 23-24)

# Finns resent opening of old wounds

**Antoine Jacob in Helsinki**

HEIKKI YLIKANGAS holds up a few postcards. One shows a Communist parade somewhere in the Soviet Union. "This is absurd! The anonymous mail I get accuses me of regretting that Finland did not fall into Bolshevik hands in 1918."

Ylikangas, a historian, heads the commission appointed by the government to throw light on the fate of those who disappeared during and after the civil war that bitterly divided Finland a year after it became independent from Russia.

It's a delicate task. Officially, all the talk is about national reconciliation. But the battle between the Reds (Soviet sympathisers) and the Whites (nationalists) is still raging.

Sucked into the maelstrom of the first world war, the civil war went almost unnoticed outside Finland. "Yet 35,000 people died in it, or more than 1 per cent of the population — a higher proportion of people than were killed in the Spanish civil war," Ylikangas points out.

Finland, which had been a grand duchy in the Tsarist empire since 1809, took advantage of the Russian Revolution to proclaim its independence on December 6, 1917. Encouraged by the Bolshevik victory in Petrograd (St Petersburg), the revolutionary wing of the Finnish Socialist party tried to seize power.

Many who fought in its ranks hoped to improve living standards. Their opponents, the bourgeois parties, were more concerned with preserving their privileges and reinforcing Finnish independence.

"Acts of cruelty were perpetrated on both sides," says Ylikangas. After the Whites' victory in May 1918, a veil of silence was drawn over the atrocities that were committed under the leadership of a man who became a national hero, Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim. Those on the losing side were interned in camps, where 13,000 of them died.

Paavo Lipponen, the Social Democrat prime minister, believes that the wounds of the civil war have had time to heal. But, he says, "it is a good thing to remember what happened, particularly for the younger generation".

What, for example, became of the 10,000 Reds who fled to the Soviet Union after their defeat? "The inquiry will alleviate the heavy burden . . . caused by the fact that people never knew what happened to members of their family," says Lipponen.

However, his move has not met with unanimous approval. Most Finnish families suffered casualties during the civil war. Some of them, especially centrists and right-wingers, see no point in delving once again into this "distant episode" of Finnish history.

The civil war will continue to divide the Finns. Even today they cannot agree on a name for it: sympathisers with the White cause prefer to call it a "war of liberation", and their opponents "a class war".

(August 22)

Le Monde

Directeur: Jean-Marie Colombani




# Oligarchs Hold Sway in Moscow

**David Hoffman in Moscow**

VIKTOR CHERNOMYRDIN walked down the long carpeted corridor of the Russian White House. As he approached the doors leading into the office of the prime minister, to which he had just been reappointed, a short man with a wisp of black hair awaited him.

Chernomyrdin paused. The short man crossed the threshold first. Then Chernomyrdin followed him.

The scene last week, described by a government official, was a telling moment in the evolution of post-Soviet Russia. The short man was Boris Berezovsky, a wealthy financier, relentless wheeler-dealer and vigorous exponent of the might of Russia's brash young capitalists.

More than anyone else, Berezovsky brought Chernomyrdin back to power, and his appearance at the door was further confirmation that Russia remains a state dominated by a coterie of financial and industrial tycoons who wield as much influence, and sometimes more, than the politicians.

Their latest coup, in effect recruiting Russia's prime minister, has nonetheless come at a moment of high crisis for Russia. The currency and equity markets are in free-fall, the ruble is sliding, and the banks are under siege. But the return of Chernomyrdin was a sign that, despite all Russia's troubles, and perhaps because of them, the marriage of money and power endures.

Berezovsky . . . influential voice

The tycoons moved to install Chernomyrdin because they feared the government was going to let their banks fail, and auction them off, perhaps to Western investors. Ousted prime minister Sergei Kiriyenko had a plan to push some weaker banks into bankruptcy.

As the financial crisis has steadily worsened in recent weeks, the moguls have plunged into the center of Kremlin politics, as they have at several other critical moments in the last three years. Berezovsky has been the most active. He got President Boris Yeltsin to fire Kiriyenko and bring back Chernomyrdin by working through two allies — Yeltsin's daughter, Tatyana Dyachenko, and his chief of staff, Valentin Yumashev, both of whom are close to the financier.

Although Berezovsky and the tycoons allied with him have not always been able to move Yeltsin, they have wielded extraordinary influence ever since they financed his come-from-behind campaign for reelection as president two years ago. Russians have given the tycoons a nickname, the semibankirshchina, or rule of the seven bankers. It is a play on words from the rubric given to a group of seven boyars, or noblemen, who ran Russia in the 17th century during a brief period between the czars.

The Moscow tycoons use their banks as the financial core of their enterprises, but their interests have broadened beyond banking. Vladimir Gusinsky, 45, has aspired to be Russia's media and entertainment king. Mikhail Khodorkovsky, 35, aimed to be one of the world's biggest oil magnates. Alexander Smolensky, 44, once wanted to be Russia's leading retail banker but has run into difficulties.

All are men who made their fortunes in a nascent state without a developed rule of law, without a real middle class, without a mature civil society. Like the great European and American magnates, the Russians thrived under the wing of the state, and at its expense. They made fortunes because the government was weak.



Market force . . . Pensioners make extra cash by selling cigarettes and Russian vodka, bought from wholesale markets in downtown Moscow PHOTOGRAPH: MIKHAIL METZEL

Some have roots in the old Soviet elite. Vladimir Potanin, 37, was the son of a Soviet trade attache who lived abroad as a youth. He worked for seven years in the Soviet Foreign Trade Ministry; when the Soviet Union fell apart, he assembled many of the enterprises under the ministry into Uneximbank, which became the cornerstone of his empire. Khodorkovsky, 35, was a leader of the Young Communist Youth League, the Komsomol, which became in the late Soviet years a kind of business school for the ambitious.

Others took a different route. Berezovsky, at 52 the oldest of the group, was once an obscure mathematics expert who devised a management system for the huge state-owned auto company. He became a car distributor, making millions selling the Zhiguli, the Soviet car for everyman, a homely copy of a Fiat. Gusinsky had tried his hand as a theater director but began to realize the possibilities of a market economy selling office supplies, and later reconstructing office space in Moscow, the expanding capital. Smolensky was a true outsider who made his first money building sawed-log dachas in the Moscow countryside.

For all of them, the Gorbachev period of liberalization, starting in the late 1980s, paved the way for riches later on. In particular, in 1987, the Soviet financial system was liberalized, and most of the would-be tycoons started up their own banks.

When the new Russian economy was born in early 1992, the young tycoons were able to profit handsomely by speculating against the ruble-dollar exchange rate — often using the government's money. Since Russia had no formal treasury, its deposits were made with "authorized" banks, including those owned by the oligarchs.

The link between power and finance grew tighter in 1995, when Yeltsin approved a project called "loans for shares," which involved a swap: The bankers loaned money to the cash-strapped government in exchange for shares in some of Russia's lucrative enterprises. If the government failed to pay back the loans, the bankers could sell off the companies, and they did — to themselves. Many of the auctions were rigged from the inside.

In the run-up to the 1996 election, the tycoons contributed millions of dollars to Yeltsin's reelection campaign, spurred on by Berezovsky, who later boasted that the seven members of the club controlled half of Russia's economy. It was an overstatement but reflected their hubris.

After the election, according to several sources, the tycoons met and decided to insert one of their own into government. They debated who — and chose Potanin, who became deputy prime minister. One reason they choose Potanin was that he is not Jewish, and most of the rest of them are, and feared a backlash against the Jewish bankers.

Not all of Russia's oligarchs were part of this cozy club. Gazprom, the natural gas monopoly, has become a state within a state, and Chernomyrdin, once boss of Gazprom, unabashedly represented its interests as prime minister. Lukoil, the oil company, was another powerhouse. In the regions, mini-oligarchies also thrived.

# Russia Turns Away From Reform

EDITORIAL

**AFTER seven years of on-again, off-again reform, Russia seems poised to abandon the reform path altogether. President Boris Yeltsin has fired the free-marketeers he appointed to his cabinet five months ago, replacing his young pro-reform prime minister with the apparatchik Viktor Chernomyrdin, who already has been tested and found wanting. Mr. Chernomyrdin in turn is attempting to form a new government with the backing of Communist-populists and oligarch-robber barons.**

**These are two distinct constituencies, but they have in common a distaste for real free markets ruled by law and the forces of open competition. They prefer what in Russia has become known as "Latin American capitalism" — an insult to Latin America — by which is meant a system in which businessmen and bureaucrats are indistinguishable, insider dealing and corruption are rampant and foreign investment is discouraged.**

**They share, too, a demand that the state start printing rubles, and fast — in the oligarchs' case to save their failing banks and in the Communists' case to rescue the Red Directors who have stripped Soviet-era enterprises of usable assets and now want to be bailed out again. The result of an economic policy based on their shared desires would be a return to hyperinflation, and the impoverishment of most Russians.**

**This very sad outcome would naturally raise two questions, the first being, what went wrong? Some will say the West gave too little aid, too late; others will say the West provided too much. You will hear that the West foisted upon Russia a reform scheme for which the nation was not suited. Our view is that the recipe was not at fault as much as the inconstancy with which it was followed.**

**For that, many can share the blame: Mr. Yeltsin, for his erratic record and his disastrous war against Chechnya; the reformers, for their arrogance and their own petty but debilitating corruption; the robber barons, for equating their own welfare with the state's; the opposition, for being more interested in enriching itself and stirring up trouble than in helping the downtrodden it claimed to represent.**

**But it is also fair to say that the burdens of Russia's history weighed heavier than the faults of any individual actor. Nations like Poland, Estonia and the Czech Republic, united in their visions of a democratic, European future, managed to follow the reform prescription.**

**For them, democracy was a source of strength through the most difficult moments of transition from Communism. For Russia, far more divided and unsure, democracy has brought instability as well as legitimacy.**

**The second question, if Mr. Chernomyrdin abandons reform, would be, what next? Eventually, Russia is likely to return to the reform path, since there is in fact no "third way" to prosperity. But whether it takes weeks or months or years to come to a consensus on that can't be predicted.**

**Nor can the dangers, to democracy and national unity, that Russia will face along the way. Outsiders must applaud Russia for remaining within its constitutional framework at this time of crisis, and respect the choices its democratic system leads it to. But there would be neither obligation nor reason to provide further financial support for policies that cannot succeed.**

**Russia's crisis means the Yeltsin-Clinton summit slated for this week also will belong to a new era. In Soviet days, summitry revolved around great issues of nuclear peace and war. Since then, U.S. and Russian leaders, pretending to be equals, in fact have met as benefactor and supplicant.**

**Now President Clinton travels to Moscow with nothing more tangible to offer than words of advice and encouragement. How relevant or welcome they will be is one more open question as Russia charts a new course.**

# Iraq Notches Up One More Round

COMMENT
**Jim Hoagland**

IRAQ stands on the brink of success in its long and determined effort to stalemate U.N. inspectors searching for Saddam Hussein's hidden weapons of mass destruction. Baghdad's rapidly coalescing victory is a substantial defeat for world order, for the United Nations and for the Clinton administration.

The U.N. effort, unilaterally halted by Baghdad last month, received a severe new body blow last week when Scott Ritter quit. In a letter of resignation redolent with controlled rage and frustration, the organization's most effective and aggressive inspector said the U.N. Security Council had become "a sounding board for Iraqi grievances" and had abdicated its responsibility to disarm Iraq.

Ritter's resignation will resonate in Washington. House and Senate committees will probe in September the administration's failure since last winter's war scare to provide effective diplomatic and military support for Ritter and other U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspectors.

The administration has mounted three separate covert operations to overthrow Saddam, including a small, unpromising new effort that has been sketchily outlined to Congress. But these efforts have unwittingly undermined the inspection team Ritter headed in UNSCOM.

The U.S. intelligence community was withholding logistical help and specific information from his inspectors, Ritter said. Worse: The administration was actively pressuring two foreign governments to stop providing special intelligence UNSCOM needed on the Iraqi Special Security Organization and Special Republican Guard units that conceal and guard Saddam's clandestine biological and chemical arsenal.

These same elite units guard Saddam as well, and the Central Intelligence Agency has repeatedly sought to penetrate and use them to stage a coup. Intelligence from agents in Iraq might be compromised at the United Nations or Ritter's relentless pursuit of Saddam's trusted guards might interfere with agency coup plotters, the CIA may have worried.

But the agency's coup efforts have been so woeful that withholding information from UNSCOM was, at a minimum, an unwise trade-off for the United States. And impartial sources also see a disturbing pattern of professional rivalry and shortsightedness in CIA decisions on this score. This question should be looked at by Congress in its upcoming hearings.

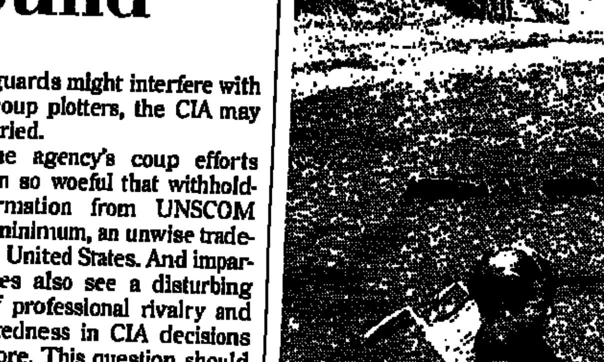
In August 1995, Ritter intercepted in Amman, Jordan, more than 120 prohibited missile guidance gyroscopes being smuggled from Russia to Iraq. But officials of the CIA's Middle East division spirited the gyroscopes out of Jordan through a ruse, refused to return to Ritter the material he had discovered and told the Jordanians to cease dealing with him.

Last year the CIA helped trigger an ongoing FBI investigation of Ritter for allegedly leaking secret U.S. information to other governments in his U.N. work — an accusation Ritter forcefully denies.

This passionately committed ex-Marine has come to personify the international community's once strong determination to deny Saddam the right to possess weapons of mass destruction. Ritter's resignation and the switch in U.S. policy risk making UNSCOM a shell of the valuable organization it was.

U.S. responsibility for this catastrophic development is heavy. But the struggle against Saddam must continue, with renewed U.S. leadership. President Clinton must re-examine his approach to Iraq. That approach ignores the fundamental point Ritter makes: Saddam was allowed to avoid complete destruction in 1991 by promising the world to give up all his prohibited weapons and to prove he had done so.

Failure to enforce such a commitment on Saddam will destroy any hope of effective international non-proliferation. It will seriously undermine U.N. credibility with the American public. Failure on Iraq will inexorably push the United States onto a solitary, unpredictable and expensive path outside the United Nations to confront these dangers. No one should want that.



No shortage of rubber rings for bathers at Pine Knoll, North Carolina, last week as hundreds of tires were washed up by Hurricane Bonnie, estimated to have caused $1 billion-worth of damage PHOTO: BARBARA MATHER

# Embassy Bomb Suspects Face Trial in U.S.

**Michael Grunwald**

FEDERAL prosecutors last week accused Osama bin Laden's militant Islamic organization of bombing the U.S. Embassy in Kenya, offering the most detailed description to date of an alleged terrorist conspiracy to kill Americans in East Africa.

In a criminal complaint against Mohammed Saddiq Odeh, a bin Laden disciple who was arraigned in Manhattan on charges that he helped plan the bombing, prosecutors suggested about as strongly as they could without a formal indictment that bin Laden was responsible for the attack. The complaint repeatedly blamed the bombing on al Qaida, an organization at the heart of bin Laden's far-flung terrorist network, and provided a detailed history of bin Laden's anti-American sentiments.

However, the complaint did not offer any direct evidence tying bin Laden to the bombing in Kenya on August 7, or to a nearly simultaneous blast at the U.S. Embassy in Tanzania, although it did allege that most members of bin Laden's group were requested to leave Kenya by August 6. The two explosions killed 263 people, including 12 Americans, and injured more than 5,000 others.

"This is an important step forward, but we are not letting up," said Attorney General Janet Reno.

Odeh, who allegedly told Pakistani authorities that he helped plan the Nairobi attack, was flown from Nairobi to New York last week. He was charged with 12 counts of murder, one count of murder conspiracy, and one count of conspiracy to use weapons of mass destruction, although the complaint said he did not confess his involvement to the FBI. It also said two witnesses told the FBI that within the last year Odeh had visited Dar es Salaam, the site of the blast in Tanzania, but Odeh was not charged in that attack.

Mohamed Rashed Daoud al Owhali, another bin Laden associate who allegedly told the FBI he threw a grenade at a guard while riding the bomb-laden truck that devastated Nairobi, was arraigned last week on similar charges. The complaint against Odeh, by FBI special agent Daniel J. Coleman, said Owhali had stated the attack was "planned and carried out by members of al Qaida as part of al Qaida's overall terrorist mission," an admission that did not appear in Coleman's earlier complaint against Owhali.

After meeting with FBI director Louis J. Freeh, Kenyan authorities made the surprising decision to allow the suspects to be tried in the United States, even though the vast majority of those killed and wounded in the bombing were Kenyan. The suspects could face the death penalty if convicted.

In the past, according to a declassified CIA document, al Qaida has "assisted in numerous terrorist operations around the world," including a 1995 assassination plot against Egyptian President Mubarak. "It provided a safehouse to World Trade Center bomber Ramzi Yousef, and attacked U.S. soldiers in Yemen and Somalia during Operation Restore Hope," the document says.

Jack Sachs, Odeh's court-appointed lawyer, told reporters that his client admitted his links to bin Laden, but denied involvement in the bombings.

# Albania Clamps Down on Islamists

**R. Jeffrey Smith in Tirana**

ALBANIA has launched a broad crackdown on Arab and Islamic groups and individuals at the urging of U.S., Italian and German intelligence officials who helped uncover a series of terrorist networks here, including one associated with Saudi expatriate Osama bin Laden and another organized by radical Algerians, according to officials here.

The effort amounts to a substantial expansion of the intelligence probe that led to joint arrests by the CIA and Albanian authorities here in June and July of at least three Islamic militants who allegedly are associated with bin Laden. Some Albanian and U.S. officials now say they believe — without being able to prove it — that those arrests influenced the timing of the August 7 bombings of U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, which Washington has blamed on bin Laden's organization.

The Albanian investigation is still in an early stage and no clear picture has emerged of the extent of infiltration by terrorist groups, officials here say. But several said they already have confirmed that the groups not only were using Albania as a haven from foreign law enforcement agencies but also were organizing support networks here to help terrorists use Albania as a gateway between the Middle East and other countries in Europe or elsewhere.

"Islamic terrorists had been hiding in this country . . . [including some] who were thinking of organizing a bomb attack against the American Embassy or against the [U.S.] aid community," said Albanian Prime Minister Fatos Nano in an interview. He said that "due to aggressive action by this government, we blocked many things" and extradited some of the alleged terrorists to Egypt.

Included were members of a radical wing of Islamic Jihad, a group affiliated with bin Laden that Egyptian authorities have blamed for an attempted assassination of Egypt's prime minister in 1993, and at least one member of a sister terrorist organization in Egypt known as al-Gamaat, which has claimed responsibility for an attack that killed 58 tourists in Luxor last November.

# Exile Plot 'to Kill Castro'

**Roberto Suro**

A FEDERAL grand jury indicted a leader of a prominent Miami Cuban exile group and six other Cuban Americans last week on charges of conspiring to assassinate President Fidel Castro.

Jose Antonio Llama, who sits on the executive board of the Cuban American National Foundation, was charged with participating in a plot to shoot the Cuban leader during a summit of Latin American nations at the Venezuelan island resort of Isla Margarita in November 1997.

Since the early 1980s, the foundation has been the leading voice of Cuban exiles in Miami and a powerful influence over U.S. policy against the Castro government.

The indictment, returned in San Juan, Puerto Rico, alleges that in 1995 the seven named conspirators as well as others who are not named began plotting to kill Castro during one of his trips outside of Cuba. To carry out the alleged assassination plan, the conspirators obtained two .50-caliber semiautomatic rifles that were to be used as sniper rifles, a 46-foot yacht modified for long-distance cruising and other equipment, such as night-vision goggles and satellite positioning devices.

A federal investigation into the alleged plot was already underway, according to a Justice Department statement, when a U.S. Coast Guard cutter intercepted and boarded the yacht on October 27, 1997, in the Caribbean off Puerto Rico. Four of the alleged co-conspirators were found on board, along with the rifles and other gear.

The indictment said Llama obtained one of the sniper rifles and purchased the yacht.





# Rural People Put Their Faith in Religion

**John Pomfret in Zhenchuan**

WANG AHBEI, 14, placed her fortune in a flaming urn, knocked her head once on the varnished planks and prayed to the Niang Niang god.

"I believe," said the coltish teenager, the conviction of her words emerging strangely from a girl half hiding behind her mother's skirt. "The Niang Niang god and the Black Dragon King are strong spirits. They will help me find a good husband one day. They will help me bear a son."

In the scraggly line behind her, scores of farmers, farmers' daughters, mothers, nephews and nieces clustered close to the god — the image of a woman hewn from wood, festooned in prayer shawls and painted in primary colors. Incense and the sweat of working men and women filled the room.

Outside, a crowd of 15,000 people thronged through this isolated valley in that vast expanse known as "western China." Snake oil salesmen vied with three opera troupes and a traditional dance company for their attention. Thirty-three fortune tellers, 55 watermelon sellers, 47 billiard table operators, countless noodle stalls and a half dozen gambling tables lined the road to the shrine.

"The birthday of the Black Dragon King," read a sign. What a birthday it was.

A journey to this village, 400 miles and another world from Beijing, was a journey to a new China — one rarely seen in recent accounts of this vast country that have stressed its urban-led economic boom, its mobile-phone-wielding middle class. Twenty years ago, the activities at last month's Black Dragon Pool Temple fair would have been branded "feudal superstitions" and suppressed.

But today, even though the Chinese Communist Party officially condemns many of the exotic pastimes here — the ritual sacrifices of a goat and a pig, the fortunetellers — there is little it can do to stop them. China's farmers are asserting their rights to traditional beliefs as never before. In doing so, these farmers, who account for 75 percent of the country's 1.2 billion people, are changing China.

The challenges farmers pose to the Chinese state are not openly hostile ones. But in many ways they are as significant as the challenges posed to China's Communist Party by the explosion of wealth and new freedoms in its cities.

The renaissance of traditional culture in the villages means that socialist values have failed to make inroads into the lives of most Chinese people, Western scholars studying the phenomenon say. The Communist Party took over China by winning the support of the peasantry. What will happen to the party if it loses the farmers' support?

"Maoist thought didn't improve people's nature very much," said Wang Kehua, 57, the head of the Black Dragon Pool Temple. "Basically, it's not too dependable."

Around Yulin, a city of about 1 million people in northern Shaanxi, more than 50 major temples, 500 medium-sized temples and thousands of smaller temples have been built or repaired in the last 20 years, according to Western anthropologists who have worked in the region.

In the southern provinces of Fujian and Guangdong, ancestor worship halls, which are not popular in the north, have sprung up in almost every town, many of them funded by money from overseas Chinese.

Shamans and yinyang masters, who pick propitious sites for buildings and appropriate days for weddings and investments, are popular again in rural China. So are traditional weddings and funerals, complete with fireworks, bands and girls dancing with umbrellas.

"The growth of popular religion since the so-called reforms is really the resumed expression of something that was never destroyed even though it was terribly repressed," said Myron Cohen, a professor of anthropology at Columbia University and one of the world's leading experts on China's popular religions.

The Black Dragon Pool Temple, built during the Ming Dynasty around a natural spring, claims a history of almost 500 years. An introduction to the temple says it was built by villagers seeking divine respite from the droughts.

But in Zhenchuan, the story of the temple's founding is tied to another tale — an immaculate conception and the birth of dragon kings resembling elements of Christianity and Greek mythology.

The temple was small during China's imperial days. Temple fairs drew scant attendance from local farmers. Gambling was the main source of the temple's income.

The Communist revolution of 1949 did not immediately bring big changes to the Black Dragon King. But things worsened during the Cultural Revolution of 1966-76, an ultra-leftist period when the party sought to destroy all that was traditional in Chinese culture.

Villagers from the surrounding People's Commune dismantled the Black Dragon Pool Temple and used its stones and wood to build other structures. The villagers say the spring that fed the temple, spouting waters with allegedly curative properties, dried up and the Black Dragon King went away.

The spring returned in 1980, after the Cultural Revolution, the story goes. A year later, an enterprising former schoolteacher, Wang Kehua, decided to leave a mark on the world by rebuilding the home of the Black Dragon King.

While not strictly illegal, his activities were protected by no law. He and bands of peasants from the local People's Commune built a little; the government said nothing, so they built a little more.

In 1982, nine villages formally decided to rebuild the temple. Wang, a skilled bricklayer, carpenter, stone mason, roofer, painter and metal worker, designed the buildings. By 1996, his team had constructed a 100-foot-long open air stage, a stone amphitheater that can seat 8,000 people, a drum tower, a bell tower, a temple for the Black Dragon King and a temple housing his four dragon brothers and his mother, Niang Niang.

In a significant change from China's Communist past, Wang accomplished these and other changes without government money — and no party support. He relied solely on donations of cash and labor by local farmers.

In 1994, Wang was elected mayor of Zhenchuan. Rural elections have been instituted by the Communist Party in recent years to increase its control over the countryside. But Wang is not a party member. "I won because I helped get things done in the village," he said. "It's very simple."

The temple plays a key role in village society — as a market center and a place to air grievances and search for answers.

Now the temple is bigger than it ever was in imperial times, a fact that is of some concern to Communist authorities. For that reason, the authorities recently pressured the temple to join one of China's five recognized religions — Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, Buddhism and Taoism. Wang picked Taoism but scoffed at party rules that a Taoist priest had to be dispatched to the temple to ensure that superstitious practices were banned.

With celebrations of the Black Dragon King's birthday in rural Zhenchuan, farmers in China are reasserting their rights to traditional beliefs PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN POMFRET

# 'Cage Dwellers' Reflect Hong Kong's Underside

**Keith B. Richburg in Hong Kong**

FOR Chan Yan-sheung, home is a tiny, curved crawl space no more than three feet high, accessible by a stepladder and overlooking one of the Kowloon peninsula's most congested neighborhoods, Sham Shui Po.

Chan has few possessions — a tea pot, a radio, a small television, a few dishes and an electric fan that stirs the hot, fetid air. His meager collection of clothes hangs on nails in the wall.

Officially speaking, Chan is one of Hong Kong's "cagemen," the down-and-outs of society who inhabit these matchbox cubicles called cage homes, usually on the upper floors of rundown tenements in Kowloon. Chan's building has 25 such cubicles, and he has lived here for four years, since falling ill and losing his job as a waiter.

The cage homes have long been one of the ugliest, if seldom seen, blights here in one of the world's most expensive and prosperous cities, where apartments routinely rent for more than $10,000 a month. Even as Hong Kong sits on top of one of the world's largest foreign exchange reserves, spending on social services — and to alleviate problems like this one — is relatively tiny.

Officially, there are about 2,000 people living in licensed cage homes, although social welfare groups estimate the real number is around 10,000 because many homes are unregistered. Many tenants are elderly, most have only occasional work or no job at all, and all say they cannot afford to live anyplace else on the small amount the government pays to its poorest citizens.

Many "cage dwellers," like Chan, have tried for years to move to more spacious subsidized public housing. But the wait for an available space can be as long as a decade.

"If you're under 60, you have to wait at least 10 years to get a public apartment," said Iman Fok Tin-man, who works with the Society for Community Organization, a local social action group. "That's why so many people are forced to live in cage homes. Just like Mr. Chan, We helped him apply for public housing about three years ago — but he still has about seven years to wait."

But his wait could soon be shortened. Eager to clean up the cage home blight, the Hong Kong government recently issued new regulations that are designed to make the cage homes safer, more spacious and more sanitary. Restrictions on the number of inhabitants in each building are intended to give remaining cage dwellers more space. The new rules will also limit how many people can use one kitchen and one bathroom.

Those cage people whose living areas are declared unfit are supposed to be relocated to new government-supplied housing. But the long wait for public housing, and strict rules for proving need, have increased concerns that eliminating the cage homes could create a new wave of homeless street-sleepers.

The new rules are designed, in effect, to put people like Lau Ming out of business. He is the self-described "King of the Cage Homes," a round-faced 68-year-old with an easy smile. An entrepreneur by nature, Lau Ming began setting up cage homes years ago, when his sweater-selling business in China went broke. He had nothing to do and he owned a small apartment in Hong Kong, so he divided it into cubicles. "I got into the cage home business," he said proudly.

Lau Ming's empire includes four such cage home apartments, with the largest housing 71 people in crawl spaces stacked atop each other like lockers in a bus station. And he is proud of his establishment, saying, "I'm just running a family business."

The government has told Lau Ming to clean up his cage homes or be put out of business. But he is complaining that the rules are too strict and would require too many costly renovations he can ill afford. Lau Ming said it would cost him at least $13,000 to repair each of his units.

But at least one of Lau Ming's longtime tenants, Joe Lai, 39, would welcome a few improvements. Lai said he has lived in Lau Ming's cage home on Apliu street for more than three years, after he lost his job, his apartment and his first wife because of his gambling addiction. Now his home is a 6-foot-by-4-foot box that he rents for $78 per month and keeps sealed with three padlocks. "I never dreamed of living in such a terrible place," he said.

The biggest problem, he said, is the stifling heat in the summer. In the mornings, on the way to the bathroom, he has to be careful not to step on the needles left in the hallways by heroin addicts.

Lai is worried, too, about the cramped conditions and the exposed overhanging electrical wiring. "What if a fire breaks out?" he asked. A fire in this same area in 1994 killed six cage dwellers and injured two dozen others.

Lai said he has heard of the new regulations but that he is still waiting to see any change in his situation. "Now the government says they need to do something," Lai said. "I hope the government can arrange somewhere for me to live. I really hope the government can find me a better place."



GUARDIAN WEEKLY
September 6 1998

# Anatomy Of a Tyrant

**Marc Fisher**

EXPLAINING HITLER
The Search for the Origins of His Evil
By Ron Rosenbaum
Random House. 444pp. $30

GERMANS visiting the United States often marvel at our obsession with Hitler — the endless wartime footage on the Discovery and History channels, Hollywood's many movies, the omnipresence of the Fuehrer in our pop culture. Why, Germans ask, do you fixate on Hitler, half a century after war's end? To which the proper response must be, Why do you not?

Ron Rosenbaum has spelled out in compelling detail exactly why we do, and why we should. He has spent a decade studying who Hitler was and how historians and journalists and others have come to explain him, but, far more than that, Rosenbaum tackles the even harder question of why we explain Hitler as we do, what our various and conflicting explanations tell us about ourselves and our societies.

In lush, sometimes repetitive, but always intriguing prose, Rosenbaum presents us with a baker's dozen Hitlers: the Chaplinesque bungler, the sex deviant, the true believer, the mad genius, the irrelevant cog in the wheels of history, the incarnation of evil, and several other variations. Rosenbaum uses textual analysis, archival research, and good old gumshoe journalism to sweep across the Hitler Studies landscape. The result is historiography made palatable and cultural criticism served up as riveting narrative history.

What's most remarkable about Explaining Hitler is how new it feels, because Rosenbaum has considered every major stream of fact, near-fact and utter fiction about the Nazi dictator and shown how the history of Hitler is the history of the postwar mind. The very concepts of responsibility, truth and meaning have changed dramatically in the past half-century: From deconstructionism to moral relativism and on to shifts in everything from parenting to governing, Western civilization has altered its way of looking at the world. That change stems as much from Hitler and the Holocaust as from anything else, and Rosenbaum shows how our view of Hitler evolves along with our view of evil, personal responsibility and human nature. "What we talk about when we talk about Hitler," he writes, "is often not the Hitler of history but the meaning of evil."



'Hitler, is it war?' A caricature from 'Crapouillot,' Paris, July 1933

An entire family of Hitler explanations focuses on the contemporary concept that there are certain conditions that make an individual less responsible for his actions. Thus, the endless speculation about whether the source of Hitler's evil was a missing left testicle or a case of syphilis or brutal corporal punishment at the hand of his father. "It is somehow more comforting to view Hitler as a monstrous pervert in his private life," Rosenbaum writes. "Then his public crimes can be explained away as arising from private pathology." Conversely, if Hitler is normal, then he is one of us, within us, a truth too terrible to accept.

Then there's a class of explanations that search for some Jewish acquaintance or relation who might have antagonized Hitler, turning him against the Jews and setting the world on the course toward Holocaust. There's the Jewish grandfather theory, and the Jewish prostitute theory, and the Jewish music teacher, and even the notion that Hitler's niece, Geli Raubal, perhaps the only woman Hitler truly loved, spurned him for a Jewish lover. Rosenbaum is particularly dismissive of such theories, which he sees as an expression of the need "to find some Jew, any Jew . . . to blame for the Holocaust."

Rosenbaum is frustrated that a half century of scholarship has distanced us from Hitler and especially from "a Hitler fully conscious of his malignancy." But with words and ideas that surprise, amuse and even elevate the reader, Rosenbaum has helped to restore Hitler to the historical record and remind us that the histories we write are as much stories of ourselves as of our past.

# A Way With Words

**Mark Rozzo**

THE PROFESSOR AND THE MADMAN
By Simon Winchester
HarperCollins. 242pp. $22

IN 1879, James Murray, an expert on the dialects of his native Scotland and the recently appointed editor of The New Dictionary On Historical Principles, called for volunteers from Britain, America and the Colonies to help create the first complete dictionary of the English language. One of the many armchair lexicographers who responded to Murray's appeal was W.C. Minor, an American physician living outside London, at Broadmoor, Crowthorne. Minor would go on to astonish the dictionary's staff by sending in more than 10,000 quotations culled from some of the least-read books in the language. Meanwhile, The New Dictionary On Historical Principles outgrew its original four-volume design, spreading out over 50 years (not counting the fruitless 20 that preceded Murray's editorship) and into the 12 slab-like volumes we now recognize as The Oxford English Dictionary.

The unlikely relationship between the tireless Scottish editor and his reclusive American helpmeet is the focus of Simon Winchester's book that is as fun as it is frustrating, though one suspects it should be neither. The "madman" in the title is Minor, who, as Murray discovered after years of correspondence, was an inmate of the Asylum for the Criminally Insane at Broadmoor. Murray had envisioned the mysterious doctor as a lettered man of leisure; by the time the two finally met in 1896, Minor had been incarcerated at Broadmoor for 24 years, having spent most of that time combing through rare editions in his comfortably appointed suite.

The Yale-educated Minor came to London from New Haven in 1871, after a breakdown forced his retirement from the U.S. Army. He had been a surgeon in the Civil War, a singularly gruesome job in a singularly gruesome war. His wartime experiences may have first got him unhinged, but it wasn't until Minor settled in seedy Lambeth, South London's "swampy gyre of pathways," that he really lost it. On one such pathway, shortly after 2 a.m. on February. 17, 1872, he shot and killed George Merritt, a laborer en route to his shift at the Red Lion Brewery. A swift trial followed, and Minor was sentenced to imprisonment at Broadmoor "until Her Majesty's Pleasure be known." It seems that Minor had suspected Merritt of being one of the Irish Fenians who, he insisted, had been stealing into his flat at night in order to poison and violate him. Minor had already complained to Scotland Yard about nocturnal disturbances, a continuation of the paranoia that had begun to envelop him in America, where strange men tried to get him to eat poisonous, metallic biscuits.

The police investigation revealed that Minor had a strong affection for Lambeth's plentiful brothels; Broadmoor authorities discovered that Minor had been bedevilled by sex ever since his boyhood in Ceylon, where his parents ran a mission and girls ran naked on the beaches.

Murray's life, meanwhile, was consumed by happier, if less dramatic, obsessions. The elephantine project of getting the Big Dictionary together was making him a notable scholar, and, in 1908, a knight of the British Empire. Still, the sad lot of Minor continued to fill Murray with pity, and he made visits to Broadmoor to buck up his incarcerated colleague's spirits.

Winchester's history of the OED is brisk and entertaining but his ear for American history could use some fine-tuning. The well-traveled English journalist has a flood of immigrants "pouring in from Ellis Island" in 1866, when, in fact, Ellis Island opened to immigrants in 1892. But the bigger problem with The Professor And The Madman is that, despite Winchester's access to previously unseen material, we're never sure when he is cleaving to facts and when he's fictionalizing.

Winchester finishes with a salute to Minor's victim that could almost be a macabre Oscars-night speech: "to the late George Merritt of Wiltshire and Lambeth, without whose untimely death these events would never have unfolded, and this tale could never have been told." The Professor And The Madman is indeed a tale or, as Winchester elsewhere describes it, "an amusing little saga." Beyond that, it never seems to know what it wants to be.

# Approaching a Critical Mass

**Steven Moore**

KEEPING LITERARY COMPANY
Working with Writers Since the Sixties
By Jerome Klinkowitz
State University of New York.
226pp. $24.50

NAMEDROPPING
Mostly Literary Memoirs
By Richard Elman
State University of New York.
277pp. $24.50

THESE two books of literary memoirs, published by the same press at the same time, seem designed to offer contrasting views of the literary life, one from the ivory tower and one from the trenches.

Jerome Klinkowitz, a professor at the University of Northern Iowa, has been a tireless promoter of contemporary innovative writers for nearly 30 years, and was one of the first to write about them. Back in the 1960s, when he was in graduate school, it was almost unheard of for a professor to write about a living author or even to take an interest in current fiction. But when he discovered the works of Kurt Vonnegut, Klinkowitz realized that innovative living authors deserved the same kind of scholarly treatment that dead authors received and, more important, that one shouldn't wait until authors were dead and canonized before taking them seriously.

In Keeping Literary Company, Klinkowitz relates in an engaging style how he came to know certain writers he considers to be the most interesting innovators in fiction: Vonnegut, on whom he has written several books; the fascinating mountebank Jerzy Kosinski; the endearingly eccentric Donald Barthelme; avant-gardists Ronald Sukenick and Raymond Federman; the sublime Gilbert Sorrentino; and the enigmatic Clarence Major. But Keeping Literary Company is thus as much a work of criticism as it is literary history and should prove invaluable to scholars of those authors' works.

Klinkowitz has fallen out with a few of his subjects but remains remarkably generous toward them all. One surprising fact that emerges is many writers' lack of confidence in their work; it was Klinkowitz's validation of their work as worthy of critical study, more than the grants and jobs, for which some of these writers were most grateful. The symbiotic relationship between contemporary writers and their critics is an intriguing but little-studied subject, and Keeping Literary Company provides a fascinating look at the benefits and pitfalls of such relationships.

The late Richard Elman could have used someone like Klinkowitz in his corner. Far from being a feted author, he was "a resident of New Grub Street," as he admits near the end of his posthumous collection of biographical sketches. He wrote 25 books while working in journalism and radio and while teaching. As the subtitle notes, these are mostly memoirs of literary figures — the others include a musicologist, a dancer, and several participants in the Sandinista revolt in Nicaragua, which Elman covered as a journalist — and mostly writers who taught him something, either about writing or life itself. They range from notables like Aldous Huxley and Isaak Babel to numerous minor, forgotten novelists (Dan Jacobson, David Lamson, William Butler). It's all a bit dismal, I'm afraid, these memoirs by a minor writer of other mostly minor writers, though there are a few shining moments: an essay on Isaac Bashevis Singer before he became famous; a touching anecdote about Robert Lowell; and an acidic portrait of Gilbert Sorrentino, the only writer in common with Klinkowitz's book.

Both books refute the principal tenet of the New Criticism under which both authors grew up, namely the irrelevance of biography to literary study. While not all critics can (or should) become pals with the authors they write about, Keeping Literary Company and Namedropping offer budding critics a more rewarding path to follow than the yellow-brick road of theory-mad speculation and obscurantist jargon, that has pretty much shut out the educated reading public from contemporary literary criticism. You don't need a PhD to read either of these two books, just some curiosity about how writers actually live and write.





Sudan is suffering the worst famine in its history. And it is caused not by drought but by civil war. The aid agencies are pouring in relief, which enables the combatants to carry on fighting. **Kevin Toolis** argues that Western governments should call a halt to a policy that's failed. Photographs by **Jenny Matthews**

# *Africa's famine is very big business*

*THERE* was no song in the morning for Ayp Mo. Just a grave, dug by her grandmother, in the green fields of Ajiep. The starving one-year-old had died the night before and been carried to the burial ground wrapped in a grey-and-red blanket. In a last moment of tenderness, Ayp Mo's 18-year-old mother, Ayak Agau, took a gourd of water, kneeled before the grave, and washed her child's body. The water glistened, tracing out every terrible detail of the child's emaciated skeleton and running down to the earth between her mother's knees. The bottom of the foetal-shaped grave was lined with a World Food Programme bag. Ayp Mo's body was placed within, as if returning to the womb. Her grandmother broke off the yellow, blue and red bracelet that hung around the infant's neck, and pulled off the tiny metal ankle bracelets. Turning her back to the grave, Ayak Agau cast the first earth behind her, on top of her first-born child. There were no prayers, no ceremony and no tears.

This child's life need not have been lost. It should not have been lost. But it was. Just metres away, more holes were being dug, and three other mothers queued to bury their children, like animals, in the ground. Beyond them lay 80 to 90 mounds in the earth, marking other graves in Ajiep's famine fields in Gogrial county, south Sudan.

Ajiep, in the province of Bahr el Ghazal, racked by civil war, is little more than a waystation on the road to hell — the epicentre of a famine that is now ravaging southern Sudan. Ayp had died in a Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) centre — a few miserable straw huts surrounded by an angry swarm of desperate humanity — that is feeding 2,700 children a week and expects to have to feed 5,000 in the near future. Without the MSF team, many of those children would starve to death. Across southern Sudan, an estimated 1.2 million people are at risk from famine. And there is no end in sight to this suffering, no end to the line of thin, bony children with the plastic bracelets on their wrists that denote who deserves rations and who does not. The next real harvest will be in a year's time, in October 1999.

In the comfort of our sitting rooms, the familiar pictures have rolled across our television screens. The huge-headed, skeletal children — almost like aliens — covered in flies, lying on the floor of a mud hut or sucking vainly at their mother's wizened breast. Or a mad, frenzied mob, fighting in the dust for the aid that our planes have dropped from the skies. Or the also-familiar blonde female aid worker feeding the black child.

These are distressing images. Ajiep is a terrible place of misery, hunger, flies and the stink of shit. It is entirely understandable that anyone watching those pictures would want to help to save those children by giving money. And, along with the pictures, come the appeals: from Oxfam, Save The Children, Merlin (Medical Emergency Relief International), MSF. Or, in the case of Sudan, a joint televised broadcast in May by the Disasters Emergency Committee on behalf of the top 12 British agencies that raised more than $13 million in three weeks. The message was simple: give money and save starving children such as Ayp Mo.

When Clare Short, Britain's International Development Secretary, criticised the appeal as unnecessary and misleading, stressing that the cause of the famine was war, not drought, she was howled down by outraged MPs and bewildered aid agencies. Who could possibly question something that is so obvious, so incontestably right? Who could deny a hungry child?

The major charities are the last sacred totem of late 20th century Britain, and have been largely immune from public scrutiny. But the history of recent disaster emergencies such as Somalia, Rwanda and now Sudan prove that the aid world's simplistic mantras are very far from the truth.

"High-profile interventions from the outside obviously have a role to play in relieving immediate human suffering, but they also contain a very large possibility of prolonging the conflict," says Rakiya Omaar, of African Rights, an agency that has been severely critical of the work of charities. "They can end up giving a helping hand to one or other of the combatants. This is an issue that non-governmental organisations [NGOs] are not willing to address — and that is because it is a matter of institutional survival. They need a presence on the ground to raise money and justify their existence. But they will not ask themselves: 'Are we making a bad situation worse? Are we prolonging the war?'"

This is not a rhetorical issue, but a real one that has been painfully learned, though not necessarily addressed, in the débâcle of Operation Restore Hope in Somalia in 1993, in the feeding of the Hutu army of genocide in the refugee camps in Zaire in 1994, and in the Bosnian Serb siege of Sarajevo.

"I see this as the central issue of this decade," says Roy Williams, head of the foreign disasters office in USAID, the largest governmental development agency, with a budget of billions of dollars. "In the past, we have acted on a simple sense of moral outrage, as if that was the only reality you had to operate in. But, as in Rwanda and Bosnia, we found that there were others all too willing to take advantage. We have got to help, but how can we be sure that we're doing the right thing, rather than acting just on a sense of outrage? We are still working at it."

Williams's words point to the hidden contradiction that underpins the famine business. It is the contradiction between the simplistic, emotive messages of starving children, promulgated by the media and the messy, confused political reality. That reality — what the aid agencies euphemistically term "complex emergencies" — includes disasters induced by war. No one can explain the complexities of Sudanese politics in three minutes of prime-time television. But everyone can relate to starving babies. It is in the institutional interests of NGOs to repeat this simple message and raise funds from a concerned public or from a pressured government. But those funds then have to be spent in the political minefield of Sudan, where real-life warlords and a tyrannical government are in power. And where there is no escape from the politics of war, regardless of how kind or generous or humanitarian your intentions are.



Despite the best humanitarian intentions thousands of children like Ayp Mo have died in southern Sudan

For understandable reasons, no one from the aid world wants to talk in public about the diversion of food aid to fighters, the manipulation of aid workers by combatants and the reinforcement of the authority of a nasty government/warlords by agencies working in their territory. Such issues would only confuse the public and compromise that vital but naive humanitarian desire to help by handing over cash.

In Sudan, as in other conflict zones, there are rules and agreements about not feeding fighters, but everyone knows they are a farce. "It is very difficult to ensure that aid does not reach the warring parties," says Monyluak Alor, a rare Sudanese member of the Unicef team that runs the Humanitarian Principles Programme that governs aid agencies' conduct inside Sudan. "At the end of the day, none of the NGOs can ensure that it does not happen."

*ALTHOUGH* these are awkward issues, it is important that they are discussed. Ayp Mo, and thousands of children like her, have starved to death because of a war that has lasted 16 years. For the past nine years of that war, the international community has run the largest relief operation in history, Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), to save them. It did not save Ayp Mo. But the question we must ask is this: did we unknowingly, by the collective sum of our good intentions, help to kill her?

The war is normally explained as a struggle between northern Muslim Arabs versus southern black Christians: the Islamic regime in Khartoum wanting to forcibly convert and politically enslave the southern population. The reality is more complicated: in the past 10 years the southern opposition has splintered and fragmented along tribal lines, or even into warring factions within the same tribal group, such as the Dinka or the Nuer.

The warlord immediately responsible for the devastation in Bahr El Ghazal, including Ajiep and the nearby government-held town of Wau, is "Major General" Kerubino Kuanyin Bol, the one-time founder of the main rebel movement, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). Kerubino, a Dinka, later fell out with the SPLA's autocratic leader John Garang, himself a Dinka, who had Kerubino imprisoned. Kerubino escaped, changed sides and, in 1994, led the Khartoum regime's militia in Gogrial county, his home area, destroying crops, raiding cattle and burning down aid agencies' compounds.

Then, in January, Kerubino, who is widely regarded as psychotic, switched sides a second time, and briefly took Wau from government troops, before losing it six hours later. He is now back with Garang, but there is no stopping the famine he created in his home province. And now the Khartoum government and the rebels' humanitarian wing, the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association (SRRA), are both pleading with the international community to save the people Kerubino tried to destroy.

The southern rebel cause — to resist the forcible Islamicisation of their society — is a just one, but there is no clear moral authority on the ground, only varying degrees of bad guys. Kerubino is just another example of Khartoum's ability to

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exploit tribal or personal divisions in the southern opposition. Kerubino's son-in-law, Paulino, a Nuer commander allied to Khartoum, is currently fighting the forces of another warlord, Riek Machar, also a Nuer and also allied to Khartoum.

In mid-July the government and the rebels declared a three-month ceasefire to facilitate aid relief, but few Sudanese expect it to last. "I do not see any chance of peace in the near future," says Alor. "The parties are entrenched. The war will definitely go on."

In 1989, following a previous famine caused by war, in which hundreds of thousands perished, OLS was established to provide humanitarian aid on both government and rebel sides of the conflict. It set a precedent for NGOs working in war zones. It was also, in theory at least, a major diplomatic breakthrough. It was the first relief operation where a government allowed the big United Nations agencies — the World Food Programme (WFP) and Unicef — and the NGO charities working under their umbrella to aid rebel-held areas and thus violate its own national sovereignty. OLS's mission statement boasts: "The humanitarian imperative comes first."

Logistically, the war zone in southern Sudan is one of the most difficult places on earth in which to operate. It is larger than Britain, and has no roads, no electricity and no infrastructure outside a few isolated and besieged government garrison towns. It is a land of endless bush, villages, nomadic cattle herdsmen and subsistence farmers. The per capita income is estimated at $200 per annum, but this is probably an overestimate; the rural Sudanese are the poorest people on the planet. Realistically, aid must be expensively delivered by air to a network of poorly maintained dirt landing strips.

To cope with such appalling practicalities, OLS has grown into a labyrinthine bureaucracy with thousands of staff, offices in Nairobi and a forward logistics base, Lokichokio, in northern Kenya — now one of the busiest airports in Africa. OLS has become the largest air relief operation in history. The two most important agencies involved are WFP and Unicef, but there are now upwards of 35 separate aid agencies, each with its own agenda, in the OLS consortium.

Like all bureaucracies, OLS is keen to promote the efficacy of its programmes. There is a bibliography of papers on the complex anthropology of the Nuer, the number of children fed at each feeding centre, the nature and balance of wild foods, nuts and fish in the Dinka diet, and the cost per metric tonne of the WFP airborne maize — $1,750, or 10 times the price on the world market. Yet no one seems to know how much OLS has cost.

According to OLS's own figures in a 1996 review, UN agencies and the NGOs spent $566 million between 1993 and 1995, an average of $200 million a year. One conservative estimate puts the overall cost of OLS since 1989 at more than $2 billion. By the end of next year that figure is likely to rise to $3 billion. That is an awful lot of aid — and yet the people of southern Sudan are no better protected against famine than they were in 1988.

The root cause of this anomaly lies in the OLS agreement itself, and the principle of "negotiated access" that underlies all NGOs' operations on the ground in southern Sudan and in many other conflict zones. In order to win the agreement of the Khartoum government to allow foreign NGOs to operate in both government and rebel-held territory, the international community — as represented by various senior UN bureaucrats — had to strike a deal with the government, thereby giving it control over many aspects of the relief operation. Crucially, Khartoum retained absolute control of the air. Every flight, from the movement of food aid to that of key personnel, had to be cleared 48 hours in advance with Khartoum. And Khartoum had the power to ban all or any flights.





Aid without end . . . Agencies operating in Sudan have little choice but to allow those responsible for the crisis in the first place to dictate how and when they can operate PHOTOGRAPHS JENNY MATTHEWS/NETWORK

Following the fighting in Wau in January, Khartoum banned all flights until the end of March — a key time for the delivery and planting of seeds to ensure the future harvest. The flight ban, of course, did not apply to Khartoum's own military aircraft, which bombed the rebel-held towns of Torit and Kapoeta in the far south.

*OLS,* because it is a UN bureaucracy, it is institutionally incapable of challenging the dictates of a totalitarian government. International civil servants' protests will never be a match for the actions of a regime with a proven track record in the use of starvation as a weapon of war. Despite warnings of an impending catastrophe, no senior OLS figure even protested — publicly, at least — over the flight ban. Meanwhile many NGOs operate on both government and rebel sides, and so were also silent, for fear of antagonising Khartoum. Instead of being a humanitarian breakthrough to save the poor, OLS has become a Faustian bargain — the aid agencies are the silent allies of the principal aggressor and, to guarantee access to that same aggressor's victims, are prepared to make a pact with a Sudanese devil. In order to aid the poor, the international community must also feed Khartoum's besieged garrisons in the south of the country — garrisons that would have fallen years ago without WFP grain. Of course, all the relief delivered to the garrisons is supposed to go to the civilian population, but food is power in Sudan. And from where else, realistically, is Khartoum going to feed its besieged soldiers?

The systematic diversion of aid has become part of the standard operating conditions of being in the "field". Agencies work on the principle of "neutralism", treating killers and victims as equals and calling for a ceasefire. Whether the status quo is just or unjust is of no concern, no agency has yet withdrawn from the field because of the cruelties of "their local partners", only when aid workers have been threatened or, in rare incidents, killed.

The rebel SPLA also signed up to the OLS agreement, because it, too, saw the benefits of "taxing" food distributions. On the rebel side, it's easier to see where the food is going. Nevertheless, in Ajiep, the MSF team has fought constant battles with the SRRA, the rebels' so-called "humanitarian" wing. Despite their charitable work, SRRA officials constantly follow clinic workers around, as if shadowing foreign spies, ban them from certain areas, insist on "vetting" all the Sudanese staff employed by the clinic, and even want to put their own "policemen" on the payroll as security staff. A significant amount of food aid was stolen, and it is obvious to aid workers that some children were receiving triple rations.

"Whenever I see a fat kid, a little buddha, come through the line, I want to scream," says one MSF worker. "To get there, he must pass through three barriers. You tear up his distribution card, but there he is again the next day. The local SRRA make things very difficult, they want to control things without offering security." Famine is not like queueing for bread; it is a fight for survival. And it is understandable that individuals or groups will seek to protect their own families at the expense of others. Naive Western notions of feeding the hungry by need are always going to clash with the complex social structure of Sudanese society.

The years of "negotiated access" have not ameliorated the effects of the war; rather, they have frozen the lines of conflict and left the international community to pick up the tab. Ajiep's afternoon skies are filled with the sound of UN aircraft beginning their descent into Wau, 40km away, to feed the estimated 120,000 starving people there. But the sound of the planes can be of little comfort to the 20,000 hungry people gathered around the Ajiep airstrip.

Institutionally, the big charities need disasters to generate income. MSF has an annual budget of $250 million, Oxfam $150 million, Save The Children $120 million. They are all substantial bureaucracies, with buildings, permanent staff and big PR departments to maintain. Much of the NGOs' effort is devoted to long-term development work that is unglamorous and receives little attention: rural hand-pump installation projects in northern Tanzania do not make prime-time.

By contrast, high-profile aid operations provoke a burst of media coverage, a ready flow of public donations and intense pressure on government departments. Government funding of disaster relief is always channelled through the charities, sometimes doubling or even tripling their income. Under the complex funding formula of the May Disaster Emergency Committee Famine Appeal, Oxfam received nearly $3 million in three weeks. MSF, which has the largest operation in Sudan, received less than 2 per cent of the $13 million that was pledged, and is now engaged in a fundraising operation, is using television advertisements as part of its campaign.

"If it [the relief operation] disappears completely from the television, then people understandably forget," says Anne Marie Huby, executive director of MSF's UK branch. To aid its fundraising efforts, MSF has a "brand" identity — its thatched huts have flags bearing the MSF logo; its vehicles are emblazoned with MSF stickers. And the white arm in the advert or television broadcast holding the starving black child will be attached to an MSF logo T-shirt. Like many NGOs, MSF positively courts media coverage of its operations.

Those images of starving children also put pressure on ministers to react. Despite her notoriety, Clare Short's department is now, as one aid worker described it, "in a flurry of writing blank cheques" for anything relating to Sudan. Similar cheques are being written all over Europe.

**_If our goal really is the relief of the suffering of the people of Sudan, then we ought to be arming the rebels, which might force the Khartoum regime to the conference table and so help bring the war to an end_**

However crude it sounds, disasters are good for NGO business. Provided, of course, that it is not too dangerous for relief workers to operate on the ground, access for TV crews is reasonably easy and the victims are photogenic. Sudan fulfils all the conditions for a good "complex emergency".

Twenty minutes' flying time from Ajiep — or an eight-hour walk — is Adet, the site of another proposed feeding centre of the small British charity, Merlin. Merlin has ambitions to be an operational British MSF. Perversely, feeding centres are dangerous places for starving people: poor sanitation makes outbreaks of diarrhoea or cholera almost inevitable, so it makes good medical sense to open as many different centres as possible and stop people congregating in one place.

Of course, the Merlin operation will save lives. But it's a further example of how the humanitarian imperative is bound up with the interests of the organisations, big and small, which declare themselves ready to answer that need.

Many of these arguments have been rehearsed internally in the aid world. The head of OLS, Carl Tinstman, disputes that his organisation has helped create an endless military stalemate. "In 1988, there was no OLS, and 250,000 people died," he says. "Did that nudge the parties towards a resolution of the conflict? No, it did not. The war will go on if OLS is there or not. The only difference would be that 100,000 people would die of starvation."

*NICK STOCKTON*, head of emergencies at Oxfam, concedes that humanitarian aid may have prolonged the war, but argues that this may be a necessary condition for saving lives. Other aid figures, such as MSF's Huby, believe that the impact of aid in any emergency is too negligible to affect the overall political outcome.

But their arguments, ultimately, are unconvincing. By the litmus test of its own mission statement, OLS has been a total failure. It has not stopped, or even blunted, the suffering of the people of Sudan. The $2 billion spent has ultimately aided not the victims of war, but the aggressors. It has helped preserve a tyrannical government.

So what is the alternative? To abandon hundreds and thousands of starving people? Clearly, that would be wrong. But, perhaps — and despite appearances to the contrary — that is, in effect, exactly what we are doing. If our goal really is the relief of the suffering of the people of Sudan, then we might as well be spending tens of millions of dollars on arming the rebels, which might, at least, force the Khartoum regime to the conference table, and so help bring the war — and thus the famine — to a conclusion. Or else we should stop pretending that we care what happens in Sudan.

A few days after her burial, I went back to Ayp Mo's grave. New graves surrounded hers, but I could still see the tiny ankle bracelets on the grave's surface, where they had been cast almost as a headstone by her mother.

On the edge of the grave was a tiny plastic blue-and-white bracelet — a feeding tag from the MSF feeding centre. Someone had written her name, "Ayp Mo", in a clear, almost copybook script with the best of intentions — as a means of saving her life. But instead, like all our good intentions in Sudan, it became her epitaph.

# Russian bear mauls Wall Street

Guardian Reporters

SHARES on Wall Street made their second biggest fall on Monday in turbulent trading as the political deadlock in Moscow took a further toll on the financial markets. Some $500 billion of paper wealth was wiped off the indexes, as the Dow Jones closed down 512.61 points — or 6.37 per cent — at 7539.07.

Dealers around the world appeared unimpressed by signs that leaders of the major Western economies had begun talks on how to respond to the Russian crisis.

The European Commission called for an emergency meeting of European Union finance ministers to agree a common strategy, with Commission officials lobbying for a more positive policy than that of no assistance until the Russians enact reforms.

"Russia concerns us far more than it does the Americans," said finance commissioner Yves-Thibault de Silguy.

The renewed efforts by the EU to plot a strategy, after days of inaction, came amid signs of activity among the Group of Seven leading industrial countries. Tony Blair, as chairman of the G7, is coming under pressure to call an emergency meeting to plot a response to the crisis. G7 finance ministers are scheduled to meet at the end of this month.

The key question of European policymakers is whether the EU is prepared to offer Russia any balance of payments support, in return for a renegotiation of the Russian debt which could divert a default. The statements of the G7 countries suggest any serious policy change is unlikely.

The Commission wants to be seen to do something, if only to dampen the nervousness in the markets about whether the Russian turmoil might affect the planned January 1 launch of Europe's single currency.

The Clinton administration moved quickly to reassure investors about the United States economy. The treasury secretary, Robert Rubin, said: "The fundamentals of the United States economy are strong."

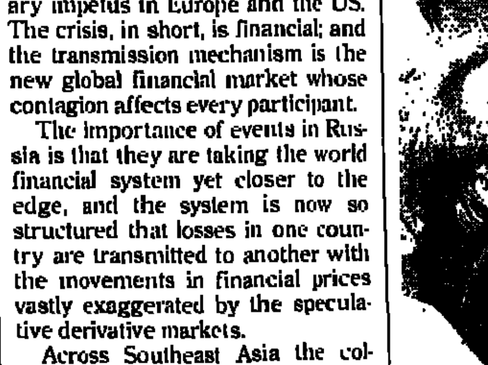
The biggest fall came in Hong Kong where the Hang Seng tumbled 554.70 points, or 7 per cent. European markets joined the retreat, with the German market index, the Dax, falling 144 points or 2.32 per cent.

In Russia the slide in the rouble and share prices, which began last month with the devaluation of the currency, continued unabated. The rouble has now been devalued by 20 per cent, against the initial target of around 7 per cent. In limited trading on the Moscow stock exchange shares slipped 1.16 per cent, which brings the decline this year to more than 80 per cent.

Monday's sell-off on Wall Street put the Dow well below its July high of 9337.97, wiping out this year's gains. The index has dropped 19.3 per cent since its July peak, so the market is undergoing its long overdue correction, a drop of 10-15 per cent. Many of the Dow's strongest shares were battered, including Coca-Cola and General Electric, as panic affected all sectors of the markets.

There was some recovery in South America with the Brazilian and Mexican markets climbing, although they remain down on the year.

# World must wake up to this disaster



COMMENT
Will Hutton

EVER SINCE the financial crisis erupted in Thailand last June, the consensus view in the West has consistently misunderstood and played down the dimensions of what is now plainly the most serious threat to the world economy since the second world war.

The calamitous misdiagnosis has reinforced the West's leaders in their inclination to minimise their response, which itself has reinforced the problem. Last week's interpretation and reaction to events in Russia has been typical, so that a deepening global economic malaise has been matched by political impotence. The risk of a world economic catastrophe may still be slight, but it is a risk that is growing by the day.

Russia's economy is not large, it is said. Its role in the world trading system is small. Its stock market is tiny. Its banking system is barely developed. The real fear is not economic, but political given that the country retains a formidable arsenal of nuclear weaponry. What the West must do is to keep its nerve, and be on its guard for any political fall-out. Potential Russian hyperinflation and default on its international debt are concerning, but the consequences need not provoke major economic difficulties in the United States and Western Europe. The West can keep its distance.

Once again the consensus view has failed to come to terms with the heart of the global economic problem or the nature of the transmission mechanism that now so menaces world prosperity. Russia's government and private firms together owe $194 billion of foreign debt to overseas governments and banks — the transcendent economic statistic whose neglect in most commentary and ministerial pronouncements is so extraordinary.

The Russian government has already said it will not service $40 billion of bonds convertible into dollars it has issued, and as the economy implodes default is likely to spread to the rest of the $194 billion. The Western banks which lent to Russia will have to recognise that their loans are valueless; that will cause further damage to their already punctured balance sheets; and it is their reaction, reining back their lending and becoming more risk-averse, that will add recessionary impetus in Europe and the US. The crisis, in short, is financial; and the transmission mechanism is the new global financial market whose contagion affects every participant.

The importance of events in Russia is that they are taking the world financial system yet closer to the edge, and the system is now so structured that losses in one country are transmitted to another with the movements in financial prices vastly exaggerated by the speculative derivative markets.

Across Southeast Asia the collapse in currencies, and share and bond markets has forced a dramatic economic contraction and exposed once creditworthy banks to the risk of bankruptcy. In Japan there is up to an estimated $1,000 billion of non-performing bank debt as a result of Japan's protracted slowdown. This is terrifying the markets into selling the yen and Japanese stocks. Indonesia has threatened default. Pakistan, enraged by US strikes in Afghanistan and its indulgence of India's nuclear bomb, is also flirting with default. Both countries are watching hawk-like to see if they can follow Russia's example.

The great Western investment banks and financial trading houses that have constructed the new global financial system, founded on the absolute freedom to buy and sell currency and move financial assets in and out of any given national economy as freely as possible, argue such freedoms are economically efficient. But what has become obvious since the financial markets launched their attack on the Thai baht last year is that financial market freedom is economically inefficient — the great insight of John Maynard Keynes generated by the experience of the 1920s and 1930s.

The financial markets, and the institutions within them, are not the innocent bystanders that they like to pretend. Rather they are central economic actors with an unnerving capacity to make herd-like judgments of massively over-the-top optimism and pessimism which carry currency, share and bond values to irrational highs and lows. The world's economic manias, panics and booms have, as the great US economist Charles Kindleberger argued, been generated within the financial system by its own intrinsic proclivities.

The key to economic stability has always been to tightly regulate banks and finance into conservative and cautious behaviour, and so head off the tendency embedded in financial markets to overlend, overbuy, oversell and rush into cash. The great policy mistake of the 1980s and 1990s has been to neglect this truth and trust in the markets' judgments. We are now about to reap the whirlwind.

Confronted by this mayhem, the West's leaders seem frozen into immobility. Part of the problem is that the principal political actors are so obviously damaged goods — but their weakness reveals a more fundamental problem. We live in an era in which government and political leadership is denigrated and criticised. This is the epoch of the market, of individualism, of globalisation, and of a Darwinian belief in economic natural selection. The financial markets have achieved their awesome power because governments have been told and become convinced that the state should not have it. The private sector should become our new governors.

The economic downturn, exaggerated collapse in financial market valuations and growing risk that other countries will follow Russia and unilaterally default on their international loans will soon affect everyone. In Britain, those selling shares that represent their accumulated lifetime savings, for example, to buy a pension annuity for retirement will find that the twin fall in share prices and long-term interest rates over the past few weeks will reduce an average retirement income of $13,000 a year by as much as $1,600 a year — a warning to advocates of pension privatisation that the state pension still has a purpose.

Unemployment in Britain looks set to rise by at least half a million over the next two years and perhaps much more. And if there is a slump, then the experience will sear the current working population like nothing since the 1930s.

It is still not too late to act and reduce the risks of recession — but to do so requires a wholesale transformation of the intellectual climate and a willingness to lead that is so far absent. But events will have their own momentum in generating change. And we are still only at the beginning. — *The Observer*



Muscovites try to fight their way into a bank to withdraw their savings as the value of the rouble plummeted

# Hong Kong acts to deter speculators

John Gittings

THE Hong Kong government... bring in curbs on share trad... in a bid to deter big investors at... have been using the stock mark... speculate against its currency. T... move comes after the authori... have spent huge sums in the mar... in a bid to fight off speculative a... tacks. In the past weeks the gov... ment has bought about 6 per cen... the city's entire stock market, ... ing it among the largest shareh... ers of HSBC, Hong Kong Tele... and other benchmark firms.

The government intervened heavily on Friday last week tha... market's turnover for the day ... double that of the previous re... The Hong Kong monetary auth... bought about US$7.5 billion of s... in its biggest attempt yet to ... back waves of share-selling and ... tect the Hong Kong currency. It spent more than $12.5 billion ... it waded into the market.

In what has become a nu... contest newspapers have car... headlines invoking "war against ... speculators".

Hong Kong Chinese entre... neurs, however, back the gov... ment, largely because their sh... are being rescued from free-f... its intervention.

In this turmoil, the comfort... image of a laissez-faire governm... which leaves the market to fin... own level has been destroyed ... territory where profit-seeking ... never had a bad name, specul... are being portrayed as unpatr... and as barbarians from abroad.

Financial secretary Don... Tsang accused speculators of ... ing devised a fiendish "double ... — simultaneously attacking ... Hong Kong dollar and shor... local stocks and Hang Seng futu... But the peg between the H... Kong and American dollars ... remained stable, and the index ... not collapsed. "We [the Hong K... government] have frustrated th... plan," Mr Tsang concluded.

With the former colony's GI... now set to contract by 4 percent, ... Tsang admitted that Hong Kong ... the prisoner of "regional eco... turmoil". Malaysia and South K... have reported a second consecu... quarter of economic contra... The Philippines has also shown ... ative growth and Singapore i... pected to become negative ... last two quarters of this year.





















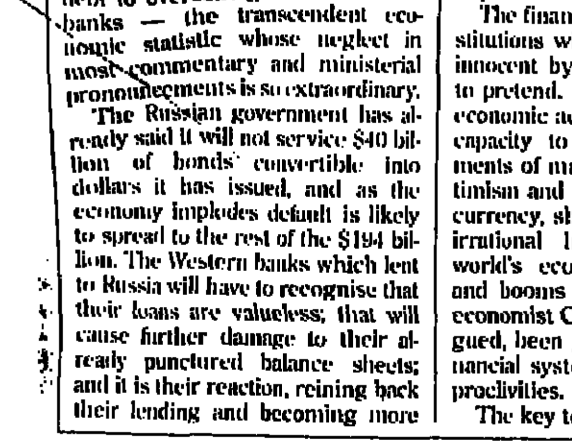












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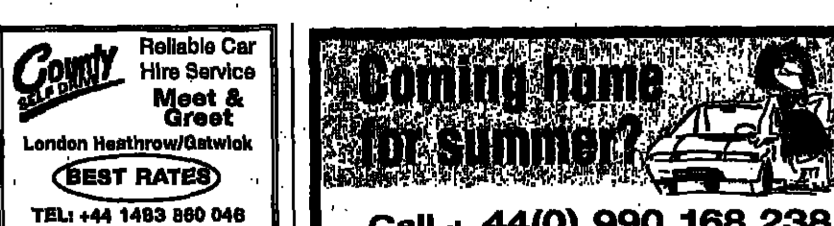
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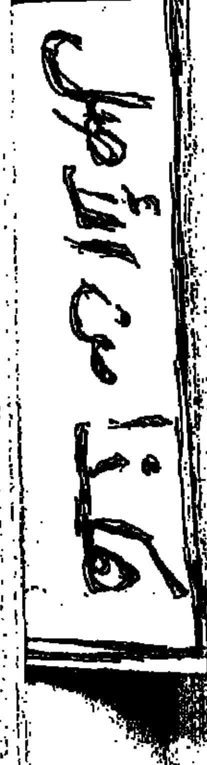



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As yet another study portrays men as victims of the gender war, **Charlotte Raven** argues that the truth behind 'masculinity in crisis' is far less arresting. Men are as bad as ever and women have stopped caring

# Belt up, boys

*ANOTHER* day, another report confirming men's supposed oppression. This time — the global crisis — as men across four continents confess to being slightly annoyed that they're not getting enough attention. According to a study by a marketing firm, Research International, men are feeling unappreciated. Women hardly acknowledge them, except to laugh and point. On the odd occasions they are still noticed it is only as the butt of sexual jibes (those ludicrous comedy penises!) or as scapegoats for the war crimes of their gender.

This portrait of men as cringing sycophants whose women-pleasing impulses are thwarted by our gender's cold indifference is not terribly convincing. Since when have men been so concerned with giving us what we want, rather than pursuing their own interests? The fact that so many of them now claim to want to impress us tells us more about the spin-doctored version of the "crisis of masculinity" than it does about the truth behind it.

Somewhat more suggestive is that portion of the study in which men are asked their opinions as to how things might change. Strangely, they say that what they yearn for is not so much female approval as a return to the good old days when girls were simply girls and no one asked them what they thought. From Austria to Argentina, Singapore to Sweden, men are admitting nostalgia for that wonderful pre-feminist era and bemoaning their lost advantage. Only in New Zealand, where, in gender terms, "change is limited", is it possible to find a happy man. Elsewhere, it's all gloom and doom tempered, perhaps, with a kind of relief that at least they are being honest.

This is understandable. No one loses something as precious as the culturally sanctioned right to lord it over half the population without going through some trauma. The problem for me is not the fact that they want to be back on top so much as the endless denials that "masculinism" in any of its current incarnations is ever anything other than a purely regressive force.

The "crisis of masculinity", as it is presented by most commentators, casts men as the helpless victims of political and cultural change. In the workplace, they are suffering from the shift away from manufacturing towards female-friendly service industries. The presumption here is that men cannot possibly adapt to the labour market's new requirements. Of course, men are resistant to retraining, but are we really saying that you can't teach a miner to type?

Then there's the problem of the family. More and more women are, in one way or another, choosing single motherhood. One in five British families is headed by a single mother. So what is the future for fathers? This is always presented as a problem for social policy — fathers should be given more rights and women prevented from excluding them — but is it not, in reality, a matter for men themselves?

The truth is that very few women would rather be lone parents than a part of a successful partnership. If they do end up excluding men, they do so because of disillusionment and, in some cases, utter despair at ever finding anyone suitable. It may sound harsh to point it out, but women are increasingly rejecting men because they are simply not good enough. To say this is women's fault is rather like blaming a consumer for returning shoddy goods.

Men are not society's victims, they are victims of their own refusal to adapt to a changing world. Floundering in history's slipstream, they continue to reject the hands held out to help them climb aboard. It seems that they would rather die than ever do anything differently. This would involve accepting that the old ways no longer make sense and giving women credit for noticing. And this would be unthinkable. So what do they do instead? The clever ones create a diversion by proclaiming themselves oppressed, while the others simply carry on in the manner to which they are accustomed.

It is difficult to underestimate the extent to which men have changed. Apart from liking clothes more than they once did, they are very little altered from the days when we considered them the problem. It may seem boring to point it out, but men are still beating up women, harassing them in the workplace and embarrassing them in the street. Of course, most men are not involved in any of these activities, but many of those supposed innocents are guilty of the lesser offences which these days go completely unremarked. Many of them happen in relationships and range from cheating on your wife to old-fashioned self-obsession and its consequence — emotional neglect.

When it comes to expressing his attitudes, nineties man has one advantage over most of his predecessors. He is allowed to be honest. Remember — there was a time when men concealed their innermost thoughts and managed, by this effort, to convince us that they were respectable. Now they have ditched the pretence, preferring to display their dirty linen as if it were something to be proud of. In a recent Arena survey, 96 per cent of men admitted/boasted that they'd cheat on their girlfriends or wives if they thought they could get away with it.

*WITH* the cries of "I'm a wanker, me" resounding across the culture, it's hard to see how anyone could argue that men were in any way reformed. If anything, they are worse, and we shouldn't let ourselves be fooled by any "Ooh, aren't I awful" confessions, the purpose of which is to present them as flawed but essentially endearing.

Unfortunately, this strategy appears to have been successful. Whereas once they could expect to be pulled up for their behaviour by feminists and rational males, the "wankers" are now indulged, as we have come to think that attacking them would somehow be unfair. This myth that they are rather hard-done-by — perpetuated by men and former feminists like Fay Weldon — has altered our perception of what they do to the point where we no longer notice if they overstep the mark.

Aspects of male behaviour w[illegible] used to be regarded as expres[illegible] of their dominance are now s[illegible] proof of their weakness. When [illegible] see a football hooligan going [illegible] his business, we think he mu[illegible] feeling disempowered.

The myth of female liberation [illegible] persuaded us to treat men with [illegible] courtesy of the conqueror. No[illegible] wants to be reminded that fem[illegible] can't have won as long as [illegible] tailed in the crucial respect of ch[illegible] ing male behaviour. Men are s[illegible] bad as they ever were. Not[illegible] changed — we just stopped car[illegible]

Somewhere, underneath the [illegible] face of the culture, the drama of [illegible] ual politics is being played [illegible] unnoticed. Whether we can se[illegible] not, relations between the sexe[illegible] hopelessly disabled by the mod[illegible] male's arrested development.

Meanwhile the people who g[illegible] about the "crisis of masculinity" [illegible] try, in their own interests, to m[illegible] the whole thing seem comp[illegible] What do women want: new men [illegible] men or something in between? [illegible] trying to pose this question as an [illegible] soluble riddle, the boys are just t[illegible] ing time. They know damn w[illegible] what they should do. It isn't t[illegible] they don't know how to change. [illegible] just that they don't want to.

## Too many words to the street wise

**Rachel Cusk** accuses the new dictionaries of pandering to slang

*I SAT* at a bus stop recently watching a man laboriously painting a grammatical error on to the façade of a new shop being opened opposite. The mistake was one of the most common in English, writing "its" instead of "it's". I wondered whether I had a civilian duty to point it out to him. Had we been French, I could perhaps have performed a citizen's arrest.

There was a poster nearby announcing the opening of the shop, in which its name was spelled the same way. They were obviously happy enough with it, a consideration which, having given it some thought, is pretty much the only guideline to modern English spelling and grammar I can come up with.

The Oxford University Press, and the recently published Chambers Dictionary, appear, on the contrary, to believe that English words are like the members of some fusty gentleman's club awaiting the revolution: conservative, self-interested, faintly deleterious and under threat. The OUP's new Oxford dictionary has decided not to defend the vocabulary of which it is custodian against that threat but to embrace it, rather as the police embrace criminals when they adopt plain clothes.

It is difficult to imagine anyone except a policeman employing expressions which sound about as natural as some outlandish phrasebook for older visitors wishing to experience Britain's famous youth culture. The cipher of youth culture is what OUP, like everyone else with something to sell, is desperate to crack. The dictionary is no longer to be the resource of those *spods* ("dull, over-studious people") who find the sight of "its" a bleak and plaintive one, except to explain to them the meaning of sentences apparently used by the OUP's new friends, such as: "Oi saddo, while you were riding the pine in your Coke-bottles, me and my powder hound amigos fakled freestyle until we nearly flatlined."

OUP asserts that it "started from scratch" in compiling the dictionary, a somewhat startling lexicographical admission that plainly isn't true. What it tends to mean is that one small group of people has somehow acquired the power to make sweeping and irreversible decisions on behalf of a much larger group of people. What it means here is that the colloquialisms *du jour* are set indiscriminately in stone without any examination of their meaning or morality, simply because it is fashionable — or, rather, popular — to believe that everything pop-cultural is important.

It should be becoming clear by now that this sort of populism isn't particularly democratic. Observers of *Blairism* ("ideas and policies of Tony Blair") will perhaps agree that in the populist scenario both the culture being appropriated and the institution doing the appropriating are damaged. A look at some of the 2,000 new "words" reveals that many of them are derogatory (*phwoah* — "appreciation of opposite sex by the inarticulate"; *beard* — "female escorting gay man in order to hide his homosexuality"), cruel (*saddo* — "inadequate person"; *breeder* — "gay slang for a heterosexual"), immoral (*dumbsize* — "reduce staff numbers so low that work can no longer be carried out effectively"), materialistic, flippant, arrogant or reductive. Were racial slander a greater part of conversation currency, doubtless it would be included. As it is, according to the fashion, only the alienated and left-out are maligned.

English must be one of the most neologistic languages in the world. This is partly because it is irregular, descriptive, elastic, corruptible and conforms to few rules, and partly because it is the root language of so many different cultures. But English as it is spoken in Britain is not about being able to call someone a saddo. Any good American novelist will write about that plasticity [illegible] individuation, the democratic, m[illegible] rialistic lawlessness that belongs [illegible] American culture and that finds [illegible] flection in its language.

In Britain, on the contrary, peo[illegible] are still judged by the way th[illegible] speak and where an agreed l[illegible] guage and grammar are still desp[illegible] ately important in order for peop[illegible] to feel they are being treated s[illegible] ously and have an equal chan[illegible] Those people are not necessarily [illegible] salesmen, skateboarders or edu[illegible] tion lexicographers who think [illegible] funny to put slang in a dictionary [illegible] may be that what the public wa[illegible] from a dictionary is correctn[illegible] They can make up slang on the[illegible] own.

The next edition of the dictio[illegible] might well contain a ruling on [illegible] probably including the option [illegible] But lest you think that people [illegible] longer care enough about langu[illegible] to play properly with it, I refer [illegible] to another shop. This one is [illegible] sunbed parlour in Tottenham, no[illegible] London, whose window sign [illegible] "This is the winter of our dis[illegible] tans."

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
September 6 1998



**Letter from Uzbekistan** Jennifer Balfour

## The cribbing game

*ONE* day my class of 20 university students turned in 20 identical assignments. [illegible]icipating 20 red faces the follow[illegible] week as I prepared to hand [illegible] back unmarked, I was floored [illegible]ally by a sea of uncomprehending [illegible]es wilting beneath my rage.

Some months later, during the [illegible]al examinations, they were sub[illegible]ted to yet another fit of irrational [illegible]ge. After disgorging crib sheets [illegible]om every imaginable hiding place, [illegible] threw them in disgust on the invig[illegible]ator's table and was met with yet [illegible]other blank face. She had seen [illegible]em, she explained calmly, but had [illegible]erpreted them differently. This [illegible]s not cheating, she reasoned, but [illegible]oral support. "Your culture believes in justice," she said. "We believe in helping each other." And there she rested her case. She accused me of not caring for my students and I sat, thoughtful and chastened.

Individual responsibility, fairness and playing by the rules permeate my Western conscience, but it seems that another law is at work here. I have been forced to ask whether the communal approach to life has as much, if not more, merit than my own individualistic morality.

I long ago gave up testing students according to their individual knowledge, primarily because of the seriously deleterious effect on my own, and consequently their mental health. Attempts to encourage classroom competition have always degenerated rapidly into flurries of eager advice passed unashamedly between members of opposing teams. Weaker students are always a target of more assistance. Woe betide the class know-all who refuses to pass on vital information, even to the "enemy".

Co-operation and communality are the building blocks of Central Asian society. From the moment a new bride enters her new household, even her baby is not her own. She produces heirs for her husband's father's line and individual responsibility only re-enters the picture when she produces the wrong sex child or, heaven forbid, no child at all. Whereas I bristle when a neighbour announces her intention to marry off her son or daughter, she and her husband regard it as a matter of honour and pride to bear the load and see them safely on their way. She will name the progeny herself, and with a simple whisper in the ear at a week old will ensure the child's future as a Muslim.

Family loyalties are prized above all others, earnings are pooled and elders consulted over every major decision. Young marrieds move into rooms or houses built for them, full of furniture bought for them, and wear clothes chosen for them. When a family decides it is time for their new bride to return to work, grandparents faithfully mind the children. Those children will, when their time comes, return all the favours owed, and complete the cycle of obligation around which this society revolves.

Students recoil at my descriptions of our aggressive, acquisitive world, where family and friends take second place over career and individual aspirations, and think me heartless and cruel for leaving my own flesh and blood to their measly pensions and the whims of state in a faraway land.

The 20 students were genuinely upset at my outburst that day. They had gathered for hours around the class swot, painstakingly copying her answers and memorising every sentence. As far as they were concerned they had done the right thing. No one student outshone another and no one felt left out.

I would be more heartless and cruel than they had imagined if I quarrelled with the means, but as their teacher I am also responsible for the end. Whichever way you look at it, their method might have taught them how to live, but has it taught them anything else? And here it seems is where East meets West. I am working on the twain meeting one day, but until I get there, assuming they have the same problems in the medical institute, I know where I'd rather have brain surgery.

**Notes & Queries** Joseph Harker

**WHAT determines whether a tree becomes oil, coal or a fossil?**

*OIL*, coal and natural gas were all created by the process of fossil[illegible]tion. The conditions under which [illegible] dead vegetation finds itself after [illegible] dies determine whether trees [illegible] come coal.

Most will rot away naturally on [illegible] surface, through the action of [illegible]teria, insects, fungi and other [illegible]asites. However, this natural [illegible]cay can be prevented when vege[illegible]on is quickly covered by layers [illegible] detritus and soil, or silted under [illegible]. The transformation into coal [illegible] place under these conditions, [illegible] during the Carboniferous [illegible] about 340-270 million years [illegible], and at high pressures, as layer [illegible] a layer built up. Basically coal is [illegible]lised vegetation.

Although peat is thought to rep[illegible]nt the first stage in this process, [illegible] conditions that caused coal to be [illegible]med do not exist today. The Car[illegible]iferous flora were very different [illegible]n what we know — much more [illegible]undant and more subject to being [illegible]pped in conditions that prevent [illegible]cay. Oil was formed in a similar [illegible]nner, but it represents the re[illegible]ins of long-dead sea creatures, [illegible] vegetation. — *Iain Fenton, Tilli[illegible]ultry, Clackmannanshire*

trade continues unhindered and transnational corporations can continue to make huge profits.

The World Bank, the name given to the IBRD (International Bank of Reconstruction and Development) and the IDA (International Development Association), is a little more complex. The IBRD was originally designed to oversee and co-ordinate the rebuilding of post-war Europe. The IDA was set up in the early 1960s to provide soft (low interest, long-term) loans to the poorest countries. Sceptics, myself included, would suggest that rather than development per se, the purpose of these institutions is to ensure that the poorest economies can function just enough to ensure supplies of raw materials and markets for surplus goods. I would suggest the questioner refer to the excellent book Faith And Credit, by Susan George and Fabrizio Sabelli. — *Ross Copeland, Kassel, Germany*

*THE* World Bank's and the International Monetary Fund's job is to screw up poor but mismanaged countries without having any idea about what is going on. The main difference between them is that the name of one is fancier than the other. The relationship between them is that they both are greatly influenced by the United States, which is most effective when using them for petty revenge. Remember Vietnam? — *Long Vo-Phuoc, Sydney, Australia*

**WHAT is the relationship between the World Bank [illegible]d the International Monetary [illegible]und? What are their respective [illegible]andates?**

*ESSENTIALLY* there is no rela[illegible]tionship between the two, ex[illegible]pt that they were both conceived [illegible] the same conference held in Bret[illegible]n Woods, New Hampshire, in [illegible]44. Since their inception their [illegible]es have changed somewhat, par[illegible]ularly that of the World Bank, but [illegible]ir remit remains more or less the [illegible]me, to safeguard US economic [illegible]erests in the global economy.

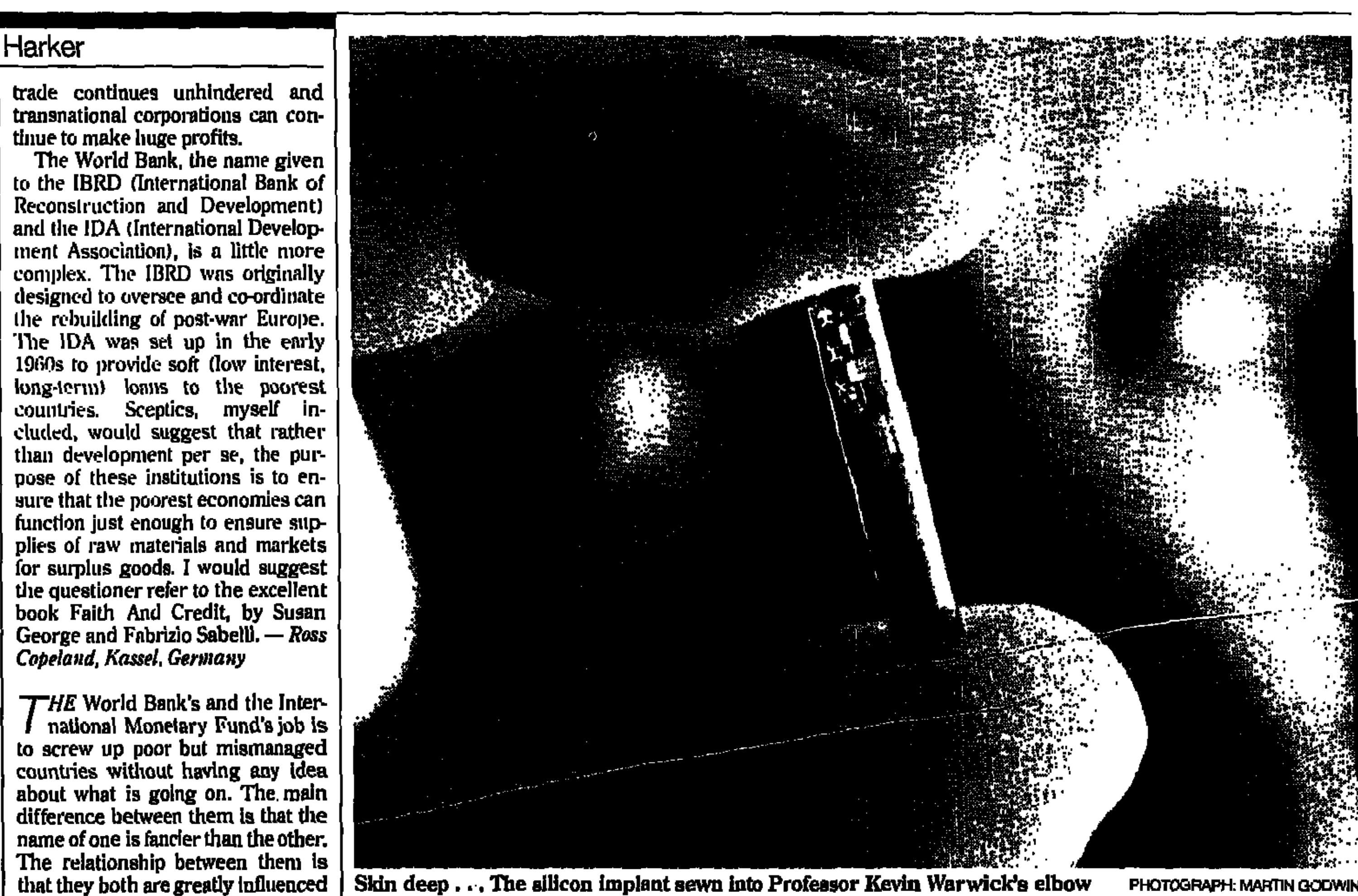
The IMF exists to ensure the [illegible]ooth flow of world trade and to [illegible]ure a cashflow crisis like that of [illegible] 1930s never happens again. [illegible]mbers make an initial deposit, [illegible]endent on their GNP, and can [illegible]row short-term funds in the case [illegible] severe balance of payments [illegible]cits. Obviously this has become [illegible]le more complicated today, par[illegible]ularly in view of the debt crisis. [illegible]ever, the purpose of all IMF [illegible], structural adjustment loans [illegible]ded, is to ensure international

## Any answers?

**WHEN a photon is absorbed after hitting a dark object, what happens to it? Is it, for example, held within the object at zero velocity? Does it bounce around inside somehow, never to emerge?** — *Daniel Chicot, Littleborough, Lancashire*

**I RECENTLY saw lists of the "world's wealthiest men" which have included President Castro, said to be worth from $2 billion to $16 billion! The idea seems preposterous, but is it true?** — *Richard Laskin, Hornby Island, British Columbia, Canada*

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/+44171-242-0985, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ. The Notes & Queries website is at http://nq.guardian.co.uk/



Skin deep . . . The silicon implant sewn into Professor Kevin Warwick's elbow PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN GODWIN

## Cyborg scientist opens door to the future

**Tim Radford**

**KEVIN WARWICK has just made history. The 44-year-old professor of cybernetics at Reading university got his own doctor to implant him with a silicon chip. He then opened a doorway into the future.**

**Actually, he opened a doorway into his own university department. As he stepped into the building, the building said: "Welcome, Professor Warwick."**

**Professor Warwick has — for one week only — a little glass capsule containing a chip and a magnetic coil sewn under the dermis of his arm just above his left elbow. It is a smart card, so to speak, up his sleeve.**

**The smart card is not a new idea. The smart building is not a new idea. And silicon implants have been part of medical science for years.**

**But last week the three things met and began to do a new kind of business. The Reading cybernetics department doorway can distinguish between people with smart cards and people without. It opens doors for those it recognises, and tracks them through the building.**

**Prof Warwick's left elbow is a step beyond, into the world of the X Files and Big Brother. As his elbow moves through a radio field, the coil within it becomes electrically charged and powers a unique signal from the 64-bit chip attached to it. "The potential of such a technology is enormous," he said. "For instance it would be quite possible to implant an Access or Visa card into an individual on a silicon chip."**

**Prof Warwick and two colleagues — Grant Foster and Darren Wenn — have been working on the networks that link simple microprocessors throughout buildings and the implications for the future.**

**Prof Warwick's implant, a tiny cylinder 23mm long and 3mm wide, was sewn into him by his physician, George Boulos. Then, if you wanted to know where Kevin Warwick was, you had only to look on a department computer screen: it checked him from one office to another. Tomorrow's intelligent building could clock him in and out, open doors for him, turn on lights, switch on heaters. The building itself would start learning. It would recognise his place in the hierarchy, remember his preferences of lighting levels and office temperatures. It could switch on any computer he approached, log him on and have his e-mail ready to read.**

**Prof Warwick said: "This really smacks of Big Brother. We are showing you science fact, but it is pointing very heavily to science fiction of the past, the building being aware of who is in it, being able to track those people, give access or not. Cybernetics is all about humans and technology interacting. For a professor of cybernetics to become a true cyborg — part man, part machine — is therefore rather appropriate."**

# Robbers redeemed

OPERA
**Tim Ashley**

AWAY from London — and away from the Byzantine backstage goings-on that have tarnished its reputation — the Royal Opera is flourishing. I Masnadieri, the second instalment of the company's Verdi-Schiller-athon at Edinburgh's Festival Theatre, is yet another triumph. This is no mean feat, for the opera itself (an early work, and no masterpiece) is tricky to get right.

It's based on Die Räuber, though a number of changes to the material threaten to undermine the impact of the play. The title translates into English as "Outlaws" rather than "Robbers", and the emphasis is placed more on the origins of violence than on its moral consequences.

The libretto — by Andrea Maffei, Schiller's Italian translator — follows the play's plot, but scrambles the psychology. Francesco Moor (Schiller's Franz) is robbed of his nihilistic, self-justifying philosophy, which makes him an icon of motiveless malignancy, a bit like Shakespeare's Iago.

Verdi was also hampered by the fact that the piece was commissioned as a vehicle for Jenny Lind, the "Swedish Nightingale". An astonishing vocal technician, she specialised in playing victimised women, and the hapless, put-upon Amalia is consequently pushed into a position of musical, though not always dramatic, prominence. As always, Verdi is shy of following Schiller's implications through to their logical conclusions: the family, suspect in Schiller, is sacrosanct in Verdi; the moral redemption Schiller denies his characters is provided in the opera when Massimiliano, the aged paterfamilias, assumes a Lear-like responsibility for both his sons' actions.

The result is unwieldy, but even so there are moments of genius where the score attains Schiller's subtle ambiguity: Verdi's churning arpeggios undercut the certainty of Carlo's heroics; Francesco's passion for Amalia has a directness and a sincerity which is shocking when it comes from one so odious.

The play's ambiguities are reflected in the opera's casting: Franco Farina's gritty-voiced Carlo is opposed to the honeyed Dmitri Hvorostovsky's Francesco; a rough-hewn hero is set against an insidious, malign angel. The rest of the production is equally strong. Paula Delligatti negotiates the coloratura Verdi wrote for Lind with ease and an accuracy that at times defies belief. Carlo Colombara's Massimiliano is the embodiment of dignity in the face of atrocity. In the pit, Sir Edward Downes brings the score to electric life.

The production is the best thing Elijah Moshinsky has done for years. Costumes suggest the late 18th century, but the characters are already lost in a surreal apocalypse. Black rain pelts down the huge windows of the Moors' Palace. Francesco has nightmare visions of the Day of Judgment, but we've already seen the world collapse as Prague is explosively consumed in fire, smoke and cannon shot. You emerge from it all feeling jittery, yet strangely elated. Riveting stuff.



Tears before bedtime . . . a typically cheerful scene from Lookalikes PHOTOGRAPH: MURDO MacLEOD

# Across the great divide

THEATRE
**Michael Billington**

"IS IT light entertainment?" someone asked actor August Zirner before the first night of Die Ahnlichen. "No," replied Zirner. "More heavy entertainment." A shrewd answer — Botho Strauss's play, known in English as Lookalikes, is a three-and-a-half hour jeremiad against modern culture, yet it is also strange, ironic and, in Peter Stein's excellent production at Edinburgh's King's Theatre, elegantly sexy.

Strauss, best known in Britain for Time And The Room and The Park, is a difficult writer to get a handle on. Originally a critic and dramaturg, his early plays were characterised by a Stoppardian metaphysical ingenuity. Ever since a now-notorious article in Der Spiegel in 1993, which accused German intellectuals of disparaging everything German, he has been viewed with deep suspicion by the left. From the plays I've seen, however, he is a truculent social critic with the theatrical inventiveness of Alan Ayckbourn.

So what is Lookalikes about? A question easier asked than answered. It takes the form of five moral interludes of the kind you might find in medieval drama. It begins and ends with three gorgeous but strangely similar women in lime-green suits — a mixture of The Three Graces and Macbeth's Witches — in a stark hotel room, where they confront a Satan who may be their lover or their evil progeny. In between, the various scenes address many of the ills of modern life: social conformity, sexual uncertainty, dehumanising technology, the growth of virtual reality. Strauss argues that we obliterate our essential selves and trivialise freedom of choice.

Some of Strauss's scenes speak easily and directly to us. In one, an 11-year-old girl with a slight physical deformity threatens to sue her parents for wrongful birth. The scene is simultaneously funny, surreal and chilling — both a general comment on victim culture and, I suspect, a specifically German satire on inherited post-war guilt.

Another scene similarly grips the imagination. A man and woman (Robert Hunger-Bühler and Jutta Lampe) are facing each other on two chairs. His hands slide provocatively under her skirt but he stops short at the crucial moment. Why? She loves him. He wants her. But he is crippled by what he calls a "half-resolve" — a mixture of desire and doubt. It's a surprisingly tender, poignant scene about the difficulties of man-woman relationships in a world where the old rules of engagement have been torn up.

Not everything works so clearly. At times Strauss labours a point or offers too many layers of meaning. In one scene two brothers argue over their inheritance. One of them, Christian, clearly represents West Germany; the other, Christoph, East Germany. You can understand "East's" anger about "West's" squandering of their patrimony. And the prostitute over whom they argue and whom "East" eventually marries presumably represents market capitalism. But when you add in references to the Prodigal Son and Cain and Abel, the scene almost buckles under the symbolism.

Strauss often over-writes, and non-Germans are bound to miss many references. Yet he still seems to me an important phenomenon: a figure who emerged from the left but now attacks modern media culture, mind-numbing technocracy and our increasing willingness to think, talk and dress alike. At times his play exasperates, but there is no denying its missionary zeal.

Nor can one fault Stein's production and Ferdinand Wögerbauer's design. Every scene is played out against a series of swiftly re-arranged perspex light-boxes. Stein also leaves you with a series of unforgettable images: the three women fetishistically dressing and undressing in what becomes a lurid red hotel room; the two lookalike brothers arguing over a prostitute framed in a salon window; a snow-bound fairytale scene where a vengeful wife rips the heart out of her treacherous husband.

The marriage of foreign and native talent doesn't always work. But the Edinburgh Festival, along with the Barbican Centre, has had the bright idea of inviting a Catalan director-designer team, Calixto Bieito and Carles Pujol, to stage Calderon's 1635 masterpiece, Life Is a Dream, in John Clifford's new translation with a British multi-racial cast. The result is sensational.

For a start Calderon's play ushers us into a strange, labyrinthine world, one that deals both with the illusory nature of existence and the possibility of change. The story itself concerns a Polish prince, Segismundo, who has been kept imprisoned since birth in a dark tower because of his father, Basilio's, fear of a prediction that his son would usurp his throne. And, when the savage Segismundo is briefly released, he fulfils Basilio's worst fears by committing rape and murder. But, although he is quickly bunged back in the tower, Segismundo is once more set free by an uprising. This time, however, he behaves not like a bestial tyrant but with enlightened wisdom: defeating his father in battle, he forgives him and forges reconciliation.

What is extraordinary about the play is its optimism. Segismundo, not surprisingly, harps on the idea that life is a waking dream, that power, wealth and pleasure are illusory. Yet Calderon emerges as an apostle of change and a champion of free will. We may all be shadows but, Calderon suggests, evil can still be defeated.

The play emerges as a mix of magic realism and phantasmagoric ritual; and that shifting quality is perfectly caught by Bieito and his co-designer, Pujol. The stage itself is a circular cinder-track. Above it hovers a giant mirror which at first accurately reflects the characters; it is then tilted crazily to suggest the disordered world of Segismundo's prince-for-a-day tyranny. Finally it is angled so the audience sees itself: a reminder that we are watching a theatrical spectacle and that we are as much role-players as anyone on the stage.

This is a notable occasion at which John Clifford's translation has reclaimed a Spanish masterpiece for the modern stage.

# Hot air and vacuous spaces

DANCE
**Judith Mackrell**

**IF ONE choreographer can define a national style, then Hans van Manen is to Dutch ballet what Ashton was to England and Balanchine to America. Early in his career, as a hip sixties radical, it was he who established the Netherlands as the most self-consciously cool ballet scene in Europe.**

**In the many works he created for Netherlands Dance Theatre and Dutch National Ballet, he not only attempted a then-radical fusion of classical and modern dance, but also experimented with concepts unheard of on the ballet stage.**

**In a piece called Situation he set his dance against a wall of graph paper and a digital clock — marking the gap between real space and time and the stage — and in Mutations he notoriously stripped his dancers naked. Over the years his work also came to typify certain characteristics of Dutch dance, including an intellectual obsession with formal puzzle-making and a fascination with dark areas of violence and desire.**

**Yet few of his works are familiar in Britain, and Edinburgh has boldly devoted a week of its festival to a retrospective of his career. Unfortunately, the opening show, performed by DNB, doesn't make a truly convincing case for van Manen's current status, especially as its earliest work, Metaphors, looks easily the best.**

**Created in 1965, this is partly an exercise in structure, with the dancers paired and re-paired into kaleidoscopic patterns of perfect symmetry. But it is also one of van Manen's most lushly textured and affecting works. The two single-sex duets that are at its heart beat with an unexpected wit and passion. The men, particularly, who gravely support each other through conventional male/female partnerwork, radiate a tenderness that's all the more powerful for being unstressed. It is a perfect instance of logic embracing emotion. Disappointingly, it is rarely seen again in the programme.**

**Three Pieces For Het (1997) has some briefly arresting moments, such as the startlingly jagged phrases that rip though Arvo Part's music in its final duet, but otherwise it is all hot air and vacuous spaces, which are filled by dancers stalking the stage with preposterously sullen expressions.**

**The popular 5 Tangos concludes the programme, but despite the heat of its music, it's always seemed to me a flatly unerotic work. The dancers themselves, however, displayed some impressively high-bred technique and glamour, and the evening left me wanting more not of van Manen, but of DNB.**





# A hell of a blow

JAZZ
**Geoff Dyer**

WHAT you make of Pharoah Sanders at London's Jazz Café depends on what you want from him, on which of several incarnations you prefer. Throughout the eighties he released a string of albums, each comprising at least one sensational, surging track — Shukuru, Greetings To Idris, You've Got To Have Freedom — and a lot of default, post-bop, water-treading. A Prayer Before Dawn, a smouldering series of duets with long-time associate William Henderson, was followed by a couple of collections of conventionally teary ballads.

Meanwhile Impulse has been busily reissuing his "free" albums from the late sixties and early seventies in which a shrieking lyricism strains to make itself heard above the dense, often impenetrable jungle of instrumentation. And a couple of years ago, there was Message To Our Folks, a Bill Laswell-produced album of new material that was like a retrospective of all that was best in his solo career. There was not a weak track on it.

That's the Pharoah I love: the bearded weirdie (as Larkin called Lawrence), pan-Africanist guru of world jazz. I like him to come on stage draped in robes and bedecked with bells and percussion, as if he's just ghosted in from some African desert. Then a long, incantatory build-up of percussion and piano, gradually attaining the trance-like state in which Pharoah can open his lungs and cry out, summon up the spirit of Coltrane and blaze away like some tremendous sun god of the tenor.

His opening blasts on the horn were spine-tingling, huge. The whole of the first number was a sustained demonstration of how the rawness of his early recordings with Coltrane is now tempered by the grandeur of what he calls his "cathedral" sound. But he's also gone back to his roots as an R'n'B player. That's where the honk comes from: unrestrained, feel-good raucousness.



Sanders . . . rawness and grandeur PHOTOGRAPH: PHILLIP EDWARDS

Henderson on piano and Greg Bandy on drums are versatile enough to provide support in both this high-momentum context and the more transcendental realm of spiritual yearning. The seething flamenco attack by the bass player, Alex Blake, makes one hope that some time before the end of their stint, the quartet will storm through a version of Olé (one of Pharoah's favourite Coltrane numbers).

With the trio digging into a sweet calypso groove, Pharoah sang the title track from his new album, Save Our Children. Beginning "Save our children, they're all dying" and continuing in that vein, the sentiments are almost fathomless in their banality. By comparison, Feed The World had the carefully worded rigour of a UN resolution.

One way or another, Pharoah was in pretty good chop. Naturally, he did his well-known party piece whereby, after a prolonged interlude of circular breathing, he removes the horn from his lips and it continues bubbling away as if granted some secret access to the after-life. That indefinitely sustained note marked the end of the gig. Perhaps it points the way ahead to an ambient album. I even have the title I mind: Pharoanic . . .



# Guns on the run

CINEMA
**Gaby Wood**

REPTON Boxing Gym, one of the hangouts of the Kray twins, provides the setting for Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels' most crucial scene. In the ring is a table, ready for a poker game to begin. It's Eddy the whiz kid against porn king and gang lord Hatchet Harry. Eddy (Nick Moran) and his three partners in petty crime have each staked 25 grand on Eddy's genius, which is not so much a flair for the game as an uncanny ability to read people's reactions.

Harry has set him up. There are cameras all around the gym, and a device strapped to his leg which taps out Eddy's hand. Chips and cards fly in slo-mo across the table. The antagonists smile at each other in freeze-frame. The camera cuts fast: pupils dilate, reactions are read. Harry, a true villain, has a white spot in his eye, as if a chunk had been gouged out of his iris.

The bet is raised to half a million, which Harry loans to Eddy, on condition that he return it, if he loses, within a week. Harry smiles with his eyes, and slowly, silently, puts each of his winning cards down. Eddy stands up, stumbles — we see his spinning head in double, each shot superimposed on to the last. He wipes his sweating lip and veers nauseously outside.

Guy Ritchie, a British writer-director with a background in pop-promos and advertising, makes his feature debut here. The film's favourite ancestor is the British gangster film — Performance, Get Carter, The Long Good Friday, and The Italian Job with all its bungling and frivolity. It has no single hero, like Bob Hoskins or Michael Caine, just a troupe of likeable, dodgy East End boys, played by Nick Moran, Jason Flemyng, Dexter Fletcher and Jason Statham.

It has some of the comic book violence of Pulp Fiction (what makes it funny here is the boys' clueless reaction to the carnage: "What the fuck has happened here? No money, no weed, it's all been replaced by a pile of corpses"). But while Tarantino has spawned a thousand imitations, this film translates his style into an already established English genre. A scene in which a man on fire falls out of a pub sets the tone. The heroes look on, and without so much as a shrug walk into the pub.

The plot is distributed among a roster of thinly characterised but very funny gangs, each of which represent some corner of London's underworld. There is the quartet of heroes; their neighbours the drug dealers; their creditors Harry and Barry; a group of public school boys who grow marijuana; a bunch of steely-faced Samoans. There's Nick the Greek, a middle-man; Big Chris, Harry's tough debt collector who can't help looking out for his son; Eddy's dad, a threatening barman played by Sting; and a pair of incompetent scouse burglars.

Some valuable antique guns are stolen. Money changes hands in several unintended transactions. Men get blown away — the dealers have machine-guns, the toffs are impotent with air rifles. The boys panic, scheme, steal, get drunk. Everything seems to happen during the gaps in their attention.

Lock, Stock's precedents are not only in film. As the Krays' boxing ring shows, the film borrows a structure from the true crimes and true characters of its setting. The tributes the film makes to fact and fiction can be traced: Frank Harper, who plays the drug-dealing neighbour, worked in Smithfield meat market for 10 years, and has called the market "the best drama school in the world". Lenny McLean, who plays Harry's henchman Barry the Baptist, was a former heavyweight bare knuckle champion of the world, and knew the Krays. His funeral earlier this summer was a landmark in East End history. Vinnie Jones, bad boy footballer and media star, has his first film role as Big Chris.

Whether it comes from these real-life tough guys or not, the film has a pounding, free, energy, and the swift slang of the script gives it a lightness of touch amid the threats and the bloodbaths.

# Skilful character actor

**OBITUARY**
E G Marshall

PERHAPS the subtlest moment in Sidney Lumet's Twelve Angry Men (1957) is when juror No 4, a smug businessman who is unable to understand that a life is at stake in the "game" of justice, pinches the sides of his nose in fatigue, a gesture that Henry Fonda seizes upon to prove that the man generally wears glasses. It is a fact that adds to the argument for the acquittal of the boy on trial. The deflation of the man, played by E G Marshall, who has died aged 88, is a wonder to behold. The role established Marshall as a character actor who was able to use his very ordinary looks in an extraordinary way.

"I'm not specialised. I can do doctors, judges, rapists," he remarked. "There's always a part for an actor like me. I'm a utility man." This almost faceless quality kept Marshall continuously employed since he left his home state of Minnesota in 1933 at the age of 23 to join a travelling Shakespearean company.

Following Twelve Angry Men, Marshall had the role of the asthmatic man who will die unless he leaves New York City in The Bachelor Party (1957), one of the five office workers celebrating their colleague's last night of "freedom". Meanwhile he had been playing on stage as John Procter in The Crucible, Vladimir in Waiting For Godot and Ephraim Cabot in Desire Under the Elms, far more substantial roles than he ever got in the movies.

Marshall was usually cast as authoritarian figures, but more interesting was his portrayal of the father of a WASP family in Woody Allen's Interiors (1979), in which he skilfully negotiated the character change from being unloved and unloving to loved and loving.

Marshall, who always refused to live in California, lived with his family near New York. As to his initials, he once claimed that the E stood for Enigma and the G for Gregarious.

**Ronald Bergan**

E G Marshall, actor; born June 18, 1910; died August 24, 1998.

# Titivation that can move houses

TELEVISION
**Nancy Banks-Smith**

**I SHALL MISS *Heartburn Hotel* (BBC1) very much. In the latest episode the Zagrovia delegation arrived to take part in the Eurovision Song Contest. Zagrovians are so poor they try to emigrate to Albania.**

**At one point two drunks, two anoraks, one lunatic, one geriatric, an inner-city teacher and a man in a wig (fondly known as Old Shep) were watching Zagrovia get nul points.**

**"It does nae get any better than this," said Duggie, the teacher, bitterly. Exactly. Every week it gets worse. I tell you, slip it on at the National Theatre and it would pass as Samuel Beckett.**

**Television abhors a Thermos, so new series such as *House Doctor* (Channel 5) are appearing to fill the space available.**

**House Doctor offers scope for new and exquisite public humiliation. The truth about your house is usually reserved for plain-speaking between partners, as in: "You can't expect anyone to buy it if it smells of cats' pee."**

**Ann Maurice (as in coiffeur) is a Californian real estate agent, who will unflinchingly explain why buyers recoil from your door. She will then wipe out every trace of your personality and leave it unobjectionable as a show house. She seems a big fan of magnolia.**

**Peter Morgan was a bank vat manager who wanted to entwine his life with Doreen Guggenheim, a bank manager. (You may already find every word of this implausible). The only obstacle was his inability to sell his nice little Victorian terrace house in south-east London. Candid cameras revealed buyers' reactions and helpless laughter. "What's that smell?" "Oh, my God!" "What's that?" "DON'T TOUCH IT!"**

**Mr Morgan described it as a bachelor pad. You will get the idea if I mention that Ann Maurice uncovered a whole piano in the debris. I will not labour the matter of the mushroom spawn. Nor the hops that, he explained wistfully, made it look like a pub. Nor what Ann Maurice described as the knickers under the table. (In Miss Guggenheim's defence, I must stress that they were clearly underpants.)**

**Ann Maurice is chic and slightly cross-eyed. Either that or I have difficulty meeting her eye. She said: "This is your most expensive asset and you hope to sell it without doing anything to it. Explain that thought process!" Whatever a vat manager is, it was a pleasure to see him shuffle.**

**She replaced the carpet, which she described as early bordello. It is some index of the humiliation heaped on Mr Morgan that the new carpet was impervious to every possible stain, mould and mite.**

**All his bits and pieces were binned and banned. The house sold for £95,000 in two days.**

**Ann Maurice's titivation cost £1,425. No mention was made of her fee.**



# Black, white and mean all over

**Mark Cocker**



ILLUSTRATION: ANN HOBDAY

*THE* great black-back is the planet's biggest gull, and an adult in summer plumage is one of the most impressive birds on the American and European Atlantic seaboard. A big male can be almost 80cm long. Its chest is deep and muscular, the head sharply angled and tipped with a huge, heavily hooked bill. At full stretch the wings are one and a half metres long, and at rest they close down on a lower body that's whiter than sea surf.

Together these two portions have a startling impact, like a leather jacket over a priest's surplice. More than anything, though, it's the eyes that give the bird its air of menace. A blood-red ring surrounds each iris, but all the cruelty of the ocean is distilled into its cold yellow stare.

Not all birds lend themselves to human characterisation. But with the great black-back I find it impossible *not* to anthropomorphise. It's the bird world's biggest thug, and it may be the false luxury of an urban-dweller but I cherish the beast for its magnificent meanness. Yet I can also appreciate why it has been cast as villain and one of only 13 birds than can be killed legally in Britain.

While wandering the deserted shoreline of North Ronaldsay, the most northerly of Scotland's Orkney archipelago, I was startled by gunfire, then the sight of a crofter heading for the tideline with what looked like a sack in his outstretched hand. It was actually three great black-backs held by a single wing, with the rest of their lifeless bodies trailing to the ground, which were then hurled out to the incoming tide.

As the man's wife later explained, the gulls take not just the tiny lambs of North Ronaldsay's unique breed of sheep, but even full-grown ewes, whose eyes are pierced as the animals rest.

More usually the gulls confine their predation to other sea birds. In the breeding season some pairs specialise in catching shearwaters, skilfully winkling out the young from the nest burrow, then dispatching the adults as they arrive to feed their chicks. On the Welsh island of Skokholm 20 great black-backs accounted for more than 1,400 victims in one season. Despite this hunting prowess it's actually human beings, coupled with the catholicity of the gull's diet, that has enabled it to recover this century from a position of near-extinction.

The increase in offal thrown overboard from fishing boats is probably one factor in the bird's steady climb to about 23,000 pairs in Britain (about 10 per cent of its world total). Another factor is the bird's ready exploitation of human refuse. At one time almost exclusively maritime in distribution, the black-backs have joined the huge flocks of scavengers on landfill sites, where its great bulk has made it the king of the dump.

On North Ronaldsay I also gained an insight into the bird's extraordinary prowess as a carrion eater. Earlier this year a sperm whale was washed up on the island's beaches. When it came ashore the carcass was already well decayed, since the normally dark grey body was bleached white by long exposure to salt water. Shortly after, it was carried back out to sea, where it broke in two and was pushed up once more high on the rocks.

A whole spring and summer later, the whale's distinctive outline had slumped into an indeterminate heap of rotten flesh. Yet when we came upon the corpse, the great black-backs were working hard at the unyielding tissue. These feeding methods require no particular skill or courage, but who could be unimpressed by that digestive system?

# Chess Leonard Barden

*LUKE McSHANE*, at 14, became the third youngest player to win a grandmaster tournament and the fourth youngest to achieve a GM result when he shared first prize at Lippstadt last month. He is younger than was the legendary Bobby Fischer, who became a GM at 15, and he beat Michael Adams's British age record by a full three years.

"Lucky Luke", as the Germans dub him because of his Houdini escapes from poor positions, had a moderate start, so needed three wins and a draw from his last four games, with the top three GMs still to play. After drawing in 93 moves a pawn down against the No 1 seed, GM Giorgi Giorgadze of Georgia, he decided to try for the norm "though I didn't really expect 3/3".

In the final round, he produced this impressive attack:

**L McShane v S Kindermann**

**1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 Nf6 4 e5 Nfd7 5 f4 c5 6 c3 Nc6 7 Ndf3 Qb6 8 g3 cxd4 9 cxd4 Be7 10 Bh3 0-0 11 Ne2 f6 12 Rf1!?** A novel route to king safety. 12 Bxe6+ is risky, while 12 0-0 or 12 Kf2 can run into f file or g1/a7 diagonal tactics.

**Ndb8 13 Rf2 Bd7 14 Kf1 a5 15 Kg2 Na6 16 Nc3 Nc7 17 Be3 Qa7 18 Na4 fxe5 19 fxe5 Be8 20 Rc1 Bg6 21 Nc5 Bxc5 22 Rxc5 Bf5 23 Bxf5 Rxf5 24 Qb1 Qa6 25 g4 Rf7 26 Kg1 h6 27 g5 h5 28 g6 Rf5 29 Qd1 Raf8 30 Nh4 Rxf2 31 Bxf2 Rf4 32 h3 Ne8 33 Rc3!** White's Qxh5 will be decisive once he commands the f file.

**Qb5 34 Rf3 Re4 35 Rf7 Rc2 36 Qc1 Qxb2 37 Qf4 Qb1+ 38 Kh2 Qb4 39 Qf3 Rxa2 40 Qxh5 Resigns.**

McShane's first success was winning the 1992 world under-10 championship. England may have another chance this year with Murugan Thiruchelvam, aged 9, who also learned his early skills at the Richmond junior club in Surrey. Murugan is England U11 and London U12 champion, was runner-up in the British U14 at Torquay, and … this year broke McShane's … record as the UK's youngest … nationally rated player. If selecte… play in Spain in October, Mur… has something to prove against … top U10s from Ukraine and Geo… Strategy is his strength.

**G Kennedy v M Thiruchelva…**
**Poplar 1998**

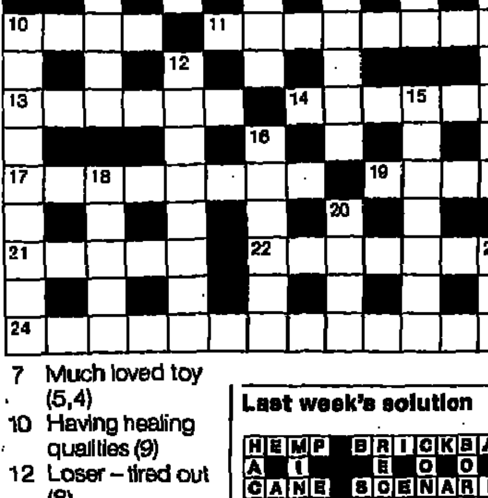
**1 d4 d5 2 Bg5 Nf6 3 Nd2 e6 … e3 Be7 5 f4 Ne4 6 Bxe7 Qxe… Nxe4 dxe4 8 Qd2 Nd7 9 Ne2 … 10 c4 Nf6 11 Nc3 0-0 12 B… b6 13 0-0-0 Bb7 14 h3 Rfd8 … Qe1 c5 16 dxc5 Qxc5 17 … Ba6 18 Rd4 Rxd4 19 exd4 Q… 20 b3 b5 21 c5 Qa5 22 Kb2 … 23 Nb1 Nd5 24 Bxa6 Qxa6 … Qf1 Qxf1 26 Rxf1 Nc3 27 … Nxg2 28 Re2 Nxf4 29 Resign…**

**No 2539**

Jose Capablanca v Reuben F… Avro 1938. Capa (White, to p… had pushed hard for a win, but … attack had fizzled out so he s… for regaining his pawn by 1 R… Rb8 2 Kh3 e5 3 Rg1 and the gr… masters agreed a draw. H… century later, an unknown am… pointed out what they missed. … you improve on the GMs?

No 2538: 1 Nh4+! If Kx6 2 B… (Mestel overlooked this!) or K… Nd6 or Ke6 2 Qf5 or Ke4 2 … Normally checking keys are … because they restrict Black's re… but this is a remarkable exceptio…

# Quick crossword no. 434



**Across**

1 It maintains equilibrium (13)
8 Alert (7)
9 Legitimate – effective (5)
10 Express by gestures (4)
11 Island part of Wales (8)
13 I must be when small (6)
14 The smart are quick in it (6)
17 Immediate payment (4,4)
19 The calm don't turn it (4)
21 Ingenuous (5)
22 Hopelessness (7)
24 Chiaroscuro (5,3,5)

**Down**

1 Sound of rook (3)
2 Dishevelled (7)
3 Quarrel (4)
4 Soften and give way (6)
5 Cover for letter (8)
6 Traditional farmer's name (5)
7 Much loved toy (5,4)
10 Having healing qualities (9)
12 Loser – tired out (8)
15 US state (7)
16 European country (6)
18 Confidence trick (5)
20 Egyptian goddess (4)
23 Herb – regret! (3)

**Last week's solution**



# Bridge Zia Mahmood

*IT MAY* just be human nature, but it is a fact that for most of us, the most enjoyable part of the game of bridge is also the most selfish. I don't know anyone who likes being dummy, and defence is often a struggle against what feels like three opponents. But when we are declaring the hand — then we are in control of our own destiny, and can seize every opportunity to shine. Players often ask me for tips to improve their declarer play. Here is one that is easy to learn, and can bring rich rewards.

When we're playing a hand, we have one special advantage over the defenders. We have no partner to whom we need to give information, so we are free to play our cards in whatever order we like. As a defender, if you have a suit such as KQJ109, you are more or less forced to lead the king in order to let partner know that you have a strong holding — if you lead the nine, he'll place you with weakness. But if as declarer you have a trump suit of KQJ10987 facing small cards in dummy, you have an array of choices. You can play the card appropriate to what "information" you would like to give your opponents. If your objective is to drive out the ace early, perhaps in order to deny the partner of the ace-holder a chance to make an informative discard, begin by leading the king. The player with the ace will be under great pressure to take the trick at once — what greater prize, after all, could his ace of trumps capture than the king? If, on the other hand, your objective is to gain a tempo by having your opponents duck the ace, then start with the ten or perhaps the nine. The player with the ace won't waste this card on "thin air" — not least for fear of crashing a minor honour in the other defender's hand.

Here is an example of this kind of manoeuvre from actual play. Game all, dealer North:

| South | West | North | East |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1♦ | Pass |
| 1♥ | Pass | 2♣ | Pass |
| 2♥ | Pass | 3♥ | Pass |
| 4♥ | Dble | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | | | |

West's double of the final contract is a greedy one, and you must make him pay. He leads the ten of clubs, which you win with the jack. If you can manage the entries, you will make (effectively) three club tricks,

North
♠ 2
♥ A 3
♦ A Q 10 9 5
♣ A 9 8 5 3

West
♠ A Q 9 8
♥ K Q 6
♦ J 8 4 2
♣ 10 2

East
♠ J 10 6…
♥ 2
♦ K 7 6
♣ Q 7 6…

South
♠ K 7 3
♥ J 10 9 8 7 5 4
♦ 3
♣ K J

six hearts and a diamond. So, a… winning the opening lead, try a… sneaky seven of hearts from y… hand. If West does not cover th… card (would you?) you are home … cash the king of clubs, cross to … ace of hearts, and play the ace … clubs for a spade discard. West … ruff, but you will then lose only … spade tricks — unless, of course … desperate West cashes the ace … spades now, as well he might!

The theme is easy to remem… and occurs frequently. If you'd … the defenders to cover or win … trick early, lead top of a sequen… you'd like them to duck, le… middle or low card.





# …rt slave of New York

**…n Cumming**

…squiat: A Quick Killing in Art
…hoebe Hoban
…er 400pp £12

*…THE* time Jean-Michel Basquiat began painting his …gnomic slogans on the walls … Manhattan in the late seventies, … city was practically covered in … art. Aerosol coated the sub… trains, comic-strip images … from Wall Street to the … Mayor Koch spent millions … to expunge every symbol … to see them all reappear … night.

…e most famous black artist of … century was then working as … of a two-man graffiti team … only as SAMO, spraying … drawings" teasingly close to … SoHo galleries. "Pay for soup. … a fart. Set that on Fire," wrote … signing off with his trade… copyright sign. "Plush safe … …k", illustrated with a sinister … crown. Before long everyone … to know who SAMO was.

… 1978, Basquiat quite literally … out: he revealed his identity to … Village Voice for a hundred … The dealers descended and … quote the subtitle of Phoebe … 's excellent biography — … a quick killing in art. By 1988, … had squeezed a fortune out of … captive wild child and Basquiat … died of an overdose.

… first predator had to wean … from concrete to canvas. An… Nosei installed him in her … basement with a boombox, a … …s and a promise of cash… To her relief, Basquiat … himself to costly canvases … as if they were public walls, … cartoons, skulls and … phrases across 5 metres of … commodity, which she would … for $10,000. At the age of … Basquiat already had a cocaine … Nosei sold his paintings wet, … …hed and even with the signa… forged. Basquiat was passing … the proceeds.

…squiat worked extremely fast … Warhol was especially jealous — … became bored just as quickly. … his coked nose to the grind… dealers bribed him with … and girls. His chief aspiration … be shown at the Whitney … alongside Julian Schnabel, … international hit, now an … throwback whose reputation is as shattered as the crockery he glued to his canvases. The only opponent to whom Basquiat ceded was Warhol, who promptly adopted the dreadlocked art star.

Crown of thorns? Jean-Michel Basquiat, famous for 15 of Andy Warhol's minutes, or until the coke ran out PHOTOGRAPH: KATZ PICTURES

Hoban's portrait of eighties Manhattan, scrupulously researched and based on hundreds of riveting interviews, is better than anything written by brat packers like Bret Easton Ellis and Tama Janowitz. By night, the Downtown artists circulate among black-light clubs where Madonna and the B-52s perform and the décor involves pickled cow parts. By day, the Uptown art dealers descend like "floating spores, looking for canvas and attaching themselves like fungus on any piece of soggy Wonder Bread".

The standard image of Basquiat during these years is of a beautiful, barefoot naif, dollars falling carelessly from his pockets, signs of the times streaming from his untutored genius straight on to the canvas.

Hoban's portrait is far more compelling. In public, he wore paint-spattered Armani for a joke and slayed people with his guileless charm. In private he saw himself as a sophisticated Charlie Parker, manoeuvring motifs like the notes in a jazz riff. He gutted art history for ideas. There are infantile images in his work — a child once complained that Basquiat was always copying his homework — but there are also fragments of Leonardo and Picasso.

By the mid-eighties, Basquiat was snorting coke from a Picasso drawing. His nose was corroded, his teeth falling out and he had given gonorrhoea to several of his many girlfriends. He had become not just the victim but the diagram of the art market: freebasing to paint, vomiting to freebase, in order to paint again — the gorge and spew of sale and resale ad nauseam.

When he died, the first person his girlfriend rang was his dealer, a self-confessed money launderer who has since disappeared. The memorial service was held in a former bank, the eulogy given by Citibank's art adviser. Nobody can quite put a price on a Basquiat now, since so much of his work is tied up in law suits or hoarded by dealers eager to inflate the market. But it is unlikely that Basquiat will have a more truthful and empathetic evaluation than this one.

# …aiter, there's a spy in my fly

**… Jenkins**

…n Echenoz
…ardo Waldman
…72pp £7.99

…HEN is a spy novel not a … spy novel? When it's written … Echenoz, supreme maker … fictions that subtly … the genres to which … also pay graceful, comic … — so graceful that "par… seems not quite the word. … suspicion of spoof does, … insinuate itself into … corner of Echenoz's world, … the author's biography. … tells us that this compre… the study "of organic … chemistry in Lille" and of "the … glass in Metz", while … the last Echenoz novel to be published in English (in 1987), had him "working for several years as a child psychologist before turning to fiction-writing". I see. And yet you could point to elements in any of Echenoz's deliciously unlikely tales — and in the beguiling, elusive voice that narrates them — that make all this credible, if not howlingly obvious.

In Lake, Echenoz leads his intelligence operatives — double, triple, quadruple agents to a man — through a coolly inconsequential plot, towards a showdown in a lakeside retreat not far from Paris. His anti-hero, Franck Chopin, is an entomologist charged with the provision of spy-flies, or fly-spies — that is, ordinary houseflies equipped with tiny microphones, bugs, in fact — which dismay him by dying unpredictably in mid-mission. The freewheeling, genially detached Chopin nevertheless finds the right buttons being pressed by the enigmatic Suzy Clair; his pursuit of her is woven into her quest for the absconded Monsieur Clair, and both these obscure compulsions are plaited with the boss's, the dry Colonel Seck's, desire to be reunited with a highly-placed defector.

As things turn out, none of them is too disappointed; but neither does any of them exactly strive to achieve a result. Spying, here, isn't a very serious affair. And the novel itself seems only spasmodically inclined to provide the familiar satisfactions of spy fiction — even its perpetually drizzled-on settings mock our hopes of glamour.

The point is really in how it's done: in the joyous descriptive touches and sidelong literary homages.

# Norman's world tour

**Kate Kellaway**

The Happy Ant-Heap
by Norman Lewis
Cape 196pp £14.99

*READING* Norman Lewis's travel pieces in The Happy Ant-Heap is like playing the game where you close your eyes and aim a pin at an atlas to see where you end up, only that Lewis himself is the pin. Wherever he lands, he has a sharp eye for beauty, oddity and human idiosyncrasy. He is 90 and has been travelling since he was a young man.

He has been criticised for not including himself more in his writing. But one of the virtues of his work is precisely that he is an invisible man. And yet, of course, in another sense, he is never absent from these pieces; we see with his eyes, hear with his remarkable ears.

Lewis regularly emerges in snatches of dialogue as a natural at understatement. A taxi driver in New Guinea tells him: "There are women in Karubaga turning themselves into bats." "That's promising," Lewis replies, "how do we get there?" He knows how to camouflage himself with calm. He is told more than once in this book, by dramatically different people, that he is one of them. He would not repeat these remarks were they not compliments he cherishes.

Lewis is often comically glum. In Nicaragua, he is told by a policeman: "I have to warn you this is Monday, so it's bean stew." "I was afraid so," Lewis replies. He gives the bean stew (initially sweet, with an awful aftertaste) the thumbs down, but it is oysters that get a really bad press in an uninhibited essay on aphrodisiacs, "Love at All Costs". He introduces us to some of the less well known aphrodisiacs such as "vulture lungs soup" and potions made from seals' penises. He considers Ninon de Lenclos, the 18th century beauty, who swore by "puréed peas with sherry" and had more than 5,000 lovers in what Lewis describes as an "outstandingly active 40 years".

Then he comes in for the kill on the matter of oysters. He points out that the "extraordinary physical passivity" of oysters makes their status at the top of an aphrodisiac chart a puzzle. But he also has some hard evidence from pearl divers on the desert island of Kamaran, a few miles off the Arabian coast. These chaps lived on a regular diet of oysters and had an "abnormally low sex drive".

Lewis is not an emotional writer, though always inclined to entertain and inform. He keeps lamentation brief. But there is no mistaking his regret at seeing places he once loved spoilt by tourism. In "Hold Back the Crowds", he describes the beginnings of tourism in the Spanish seaside village of Farol on the Costa Brava. Lewis first went to Farol in the early fifties. Then, it was a lyrical place. A sardine fisherman tells Lewis years later: "It wasn't a question of us giving poetry up. We were forsaken by poetry."

Lewis characterises people brilliantly. One of the most fascinating sketches is of a man he arrested in Austria who had worked for the Gestapo. His name was Heinrich Poldau. Poldau was "a man who knew how to enter and leave a room without the occupants being aware of his presence". He hid behind a bourgeois façade. Lewis describes (his memory is outstanding) the clutter of Poldau's living-room:

"A pair of stuffed owls held a stuffed mouse apiece in their claws. There was a shelf full of decorative pipes, and a faded print of the Redeemer, who, apart from oriental garments, could have been a middle-class Austrian of the last century. This assemblage of objects, if anything, strengthened an underlying sensation of emptiness."

The Redeemer can do nothing for Poldau, who emerges as a pitiable, "strangely infantile" figure, helplessly attached to his mother, a collector of train sets and a painter of sea views. I was struck by the adjectives: Lewis is never overwhelmed by detail and can put a crowd in a paragraph or devote himself to a single face.

Many of these pieces are previously unpublished, some written as recently as last year. They are not all equally arresting, but I defy anyone not to sit up straight while reading Lewis's account of going to Greece in search of homicidal wives and looking down wells for their husbands. He sees but does not judge. He is the opposite of tourists who boast that they have "done" a place. For him, the world is never done.

If you would like to order this book at the special price of £12 contact CultureShop (see below)

**Cricket** Test: England v Sri Lanka

# England spun to defeat

**Mike Selvey**

SHEER GENIUS had its way at The Oval on Monday when Muthiah Muralitharan, an off-spinner with an action that might get him a job as a circus contortionist, bowled Sri Lanka to victory on the final day of the one-off Test match, producing some of the most remarkable figures ever seen.

England, 54 for two overnight, were dismissed for 181 shortly before 5pm, with Muralitharan taking nine for 65 from 54.2 overs, the seventh-best innings figures in a Test.

But his match analysis of 16 for 220 has been bettered only in number of wickets by Jim Laker (19) and Sydney Barnes (17) and in terms of runs as well by Narendra Hirwani and Bob Massie. On a blameless pitch that had yielded four magnificent centuries, and on which no other bowler could make headway, this was bowling that bordered on fantasy.

Muralitharan's single-handed demolition of England left Sri Lanka 14 overs in which to score 36 to win. For limited-overs specialists such as Sri Lanka, that was scarcely challenging. They required only five, and lost no wickets, with the honour of clipping the winning boundary falling to Marvan Atapattu.

But Sanath Jayasuriya, who made a double century in the first innings, signed off in style by hitting Angus Fraser for two fours and a six in four balls with 19 off the over and then cutting Ben Hollioake over extra cover for another six, finishing unbeaten on 24 from 17 deliveries.

Sri Lanka have now beaten England in successive Tests at home and away, and are also one-day champions of the world.

When Muralitharan had retrieved the match ball from umpire David Shepherd and retreated to the pavilion, the crowd gathered to salute a wonderful team achievement. England had made 445 in their first innings, sufficient in most circumstances to avoid losing. Instead, the lack of inhibition in the Sri Lankan batting gave Muralitharan time.

Milestone after milestone was passed as Muralitharan wove his spell. When Ben Hollioake was leg before wicket to his first ball, it equalled his best match haul of 12 wickets. And when Dominic Cork gloved a catch to the diving wicketkeeper, he became only the fourth finger spinner, after Lance Gibbs, Derek Underwood and Bishen Bedi, to reach 200 Test wickets.

When Mark Ramprakash flicked a catch to short leg, Muralitharan became the leading bowler in the world this year, taking him past Donald's 66 wickets. It had been a privilege to watch.


Muralitharan, destroyer of England, in action PHOTO: TOM JENKINS

**England** 445 (Hick 107, Crawley 156no, Muralitharan 7 for 155), and 181 (Muralitharan 9 for 65)
**Sri Lanka** 591 (Jayasuriya 213, de Silva 152), and 37 for no wicket
**Sri Lanka won by 10 wickets**

**Sports Diary** Shiv Sharma

# A winning draw

MANCHESTER UNITED secured for themselves another season in the European Champions' League with a 0-0 draw against LKS Lodz, denying the Polish side any chance of recovering from the 2-0 defeat they had suffered in the opening leg at Old Trafford.

The English Premiership's runners-up, playing patient and possessive football, were firmly in control, and Lodz rarely looked like causing an upset in the game played on a grey Polish evening. David Beckham had the best chance of the first half, but Boguslaw Wyparlo at full stretch tipped away his effort. Substitute Ole Gunnar Solskjaer almost snatched a late goal, but his close-range shot was blocked.

Scottish champions Celtic, though, had to settle for a place in the Uefa Cup after Croatia Zagreb ended their hopes of a Champions' League spot with a comprehensive 3-0 victory at home. Zagreb, 1-0 down from the first leg, dominated the match and only poor finishing and some excellent goalkeeping by Jonathan Gould kept the score down.

Rangers took their place in the Uefa Cup draw after a stern defensive performance kept PAOK Salonika — trailing 2-0 from the first encounter — at bay in a goalless draw in the heat of Greece. The Glasgow side had to thank their French goalkeeper Lionel Charbonnier, who frequently came to the side's rescue, making a number of breathtaking saves as the Greek club tried to overturn the deficit. Another Scottish club, Kilmarnock, went down 2-0 (aggregate 4-0) to Sigma Olomouc in the second leg of their second qualifying round.

UEFA, European football's governing body, announced a task force to give the Continent's top clubs and leagues a bigger say in the major competitions it organises. The move is in response to plans for a $3.36 billion breakaway European Super League masterminded by Media Partners, a Milan-based company.

The task force is the first of its kind, with clubs and leagues invited to join Uefa at the decision-making table. It is a significant step, symbolising the increasing power of élite clubs.

THE import of top football talent into Britain has become such big business that it can no longer be ignored by the Government. In the past, transfer fees were considered too trivial to be included in the national accounts, but with nearly $120 million worth of talent joining the English Premiership since June, the Office of National Statistics has decided to include the dealings in the nation's balance sheet.

MARK JAMES has been appointed as Europe's Ryder Cup captain for next year's tournament in Boston. The British golfer, who turns 45 next month, replaces Seve Ballesteros of Spain as Europe go for their third win in a row next September. James, who has played in seven Ryder Cups, is currently serving as chairman of the PGA Tournament Committee and will have Sam Torrance and Ken Brown as his assistants. He said: "I feel I have the experience to get the best out of the team and deal with the problems that come along ... I won't be afraid to make decisions over my two wild-card selections, my pairings and my singles order."

CHRIS BOARDMAN agreed a two-year extension to his current contract with the French team Credit Agricole, until the end of 2000. The British cyclist has been with the team, formerly known as GAN, since turning professional in 1993. Boardman, holder of the world one-hour record, also won the world pursuit title in 1994 and 1996. But last week he made a first-round exit from the 4,000-metres pursuit on the opening day of the world championships — by coincidence also his 30th birthday — in Bordeaux.

**Rugby Union** Bledisloe Cup: Australia 19 New Zealand 14

# All Blacks' darkest hour as they lose again

**Martin Palmer in Sydney**

WALLABY full-back Matt Burke made up for some wayward kicking with a dramatic late try as Australia consigned New Zealand's rugby team to its worst losing run last weekend. Burke crossed with seven minutes left to put Australia ahead for the first time.

Australia had already secured the Bledisloe Cup with wins in Melbourne and Wellington, and South Africa had claimed the Tri-Nations, so there was little on the line apart from history.

It was Australia's second 3-0 series whitewashing against New Zealand — the first was in 1929. The All Blacks had never lost more than four matches in a row before this game.

"That clean sweep means a lot to us, especially coming from behind," said Wallaby captain John Eales who kicked four penalties and a conversion: "I'm so proud."

The weight of history seemed oppressive in a dull first half punctuated by 20 penalties. The Wallabies had 14 of them, but Burke, who scored all of Australia's points in the opening win, missed three simple shots at goal.

Fly-half Andrew Mehrtens opened the scoring on eight minutes with a 35-metre drop goal before Christian Cullen left Burke stranded with a stunning 40-metre run in the 17th. Mehrtens's conversion attempt was charged down, but the All Black added another penalty to gain an 11-0 half-time lead.

Australia replaced Burke as kicker after the break, Eales guiding over two penalties to cut the margin to 11-6.

Referee David McHugh played a New Zealand advantage for a long time before calling a penalty in front of the Australian posts, allowing Mehrtens to kick the visitors to a 14-6 lead after 64 minutes.

McHugh blew for another penalty, the 30th, and Eales backed his luck, scoring from out wide on the left. Another penalty put Australia on attack, and George Gregan made the decisive break. His 15-metre run set up Burke for a short dash to the line, and he completed the try in agony as his shoulder buckled under his dive for the line.

Eales completed the comeback by banging over the conversion. The crowd of 40,501 celebrated Eales' final penalty with a three-minute version of Waltzing Matilda.

Afterwards John Hart, the All Blacks' coach, offered to resign, but won the backing of New Zealand Rugby Union chairman, Rob Fisher.

## Football results

**FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP:**
Arsenal 0, Charlton 0; Blackburn 1, Leicester 0; Coventry 0, West Ham 0; Everton 0, Tottenham 1; Middlesbro 1, Derby 1; Newcastle 1, Liverpool 4; Sheff Wed 0, Aston Villa 1; Southampton 1, Nottm For 2; Wimbledon 1, Leeds United 1.

**NATIONWIDE LEAGUE:**
**Division One:**
Birminghm 0, Barnsley 0; Bolton 2, Sheff Utd 2; Huddersfld 3, Portsmth 3; Ipswich 0, Sunderland 2; Oxford 0, Grimsby 0; QPR 0, Bury 0; Stockport 1, Crystal Pal 1; Swindon 1, Port Vale 1; Tranmere 1, Bristol City 1; WBA 2, Norwich 0.

**Division Two:**
Blackpool 2, Gillingham 2; Bristol R 3, Wigan 2; Chesterfld 1, Reading 0; Fulham 0, Bournemth 0; Lincoln 3, Preston 4; Luton 2, Colchester 0; Millwall 0, Macclesfld 0; Notts Co 1, Man City 1; Stoke 2, Oldham 0; Walsall 3, Burnley 1; Wrexham 1, Northmptn 0; York 3, Wycombe 0.

**Division Three:**
Barnet 0, Brentford 3; Brighton 2, Torquay 0; Cambridge 1, Hartlepool 2; Cardiff 0, Rotherham 1; Exeter 2, Carlisle 0; Hull 1, Peterboro 0; Leyton Orient 0, Scarboro 3; Mansfield 1, Swansea 0; Rochdale 0, Darlington 0; So'thorpe 0, Plymouth 2; Southend 0, Chester 1.

**SCOTTISH LEAGUE:**
**Premier League:**
Dundee 1, Celtic 1; Dunfrmline 1, Aberdeen 1; Kilmarnock 3, Hearts 0; Motherwell 1, Dundee U 0; Rangers 4, St Johnstone 0.

**First Division:**
Airdrie 0, Raith 1; Falkirk 1, Stranraer 0; [illegible] 2, Clydebank 2; Hamilton 0, St Mirren [illegible]; Hibernian 4, Ayr 2.

**Second Division:**
Alloa 7, Stirling A 0; Arbroath 2, Forfar 1; [illegible] 1, Partick 2; East Fife 1, Inverness CT [illegible]; [illegible] Sth 0, Livingston 1.

**Third Division:**
Albion 2, Queens Pk 1; Brechin 3, Mo[illegible]; Dumbarton 0, Berwick 0; Ross Co 2, Cowdnbth 0; Stenhsmr 1, E Stirling 0.

**NATIONWIDE LEAGUE:**
**First Division:**
Barnsley 1, Oxford Utd 0; Bradford C 2, Birmingham 1; Bristol C 1, Huddersfd [illegible]; Bury 3 Swindon 0; Grimsby 5, West Bry [illegible]; Port Vale 0, Ipswich 3; Portsmouth 3, [illegible]; Sheff Utd 3, Crewe 1; Wolverhampton [illegible]; Stockport 2.

**Second Division:**
Colchester 0, Stoke 1; Macclesfield 0, [illegible]; Co 1; Northampton 0, Lincoln C 0; [illegible]; Chesterfield 0; Wigan 1, Luton 3, Wycombe [illegible]; Bristol Rvrs 1; Oldham 1, Fulham 1.

**Third Division:**
Brentford 2, Rochdale 1; Darlington 3, [illegible] 0; Hartlepool 1, Hull 0; Peterborough [illegible] 1; Plymouth 1, Halifax 0; Rotherham 0, Mansfield 0; Scarborough 1, Brighton [illegible]; Shrewsbury 0, Barnet 2; Swansea 1, Scunthorpe 2.



**Motor Racing** Belgian Grand Prix


My boy . . . Hill after his first win since 1996 PHOTO: BENOIT DOPPAGNE

# Victory leaves Hill singing in the rain

**Alan Henry in Spa**

THE last time Damon Hill stood on the top step of a grand prix podium, he was celebrating not just a race win but victory in the drivers' world championship. Much has happened to Hill in Formula One — most of it unhappy — since that memorable 1996 Japanese Grand Prix at Suzuka. Last Sunday the Belgian rain washed away the pain of nearly two barren seasons.

Hill's controlled victory, by less than a second from his German team-mate Ralf Schumacher on one of the calendar's most challenging circuits, was even sweeter for his Jordan team, having taken 127 grands prix over eight seasons to arrive.

Yet Hill was fortunate to survive a horrendous multiple-car pile-up coming out of the first-corner hairpin, which caused the race to be stopped at the end of the opening lap. "All I could see was what looked like a Ferrari and David Coulthard's McLaren touching as we came out of La Source," Hill said.

"Then Coulthard got away slightly, there was a lot of spray, and the next thing I knew he'd hit the wall on the right and was coming back across the track along with a bouncing wheel. I was heading right for him so I just had to go for it and got through without hitting a thing."

Behind Hill, cars pinballed in all directions with wheels and debris flying dangerously close to the front row of the grandstand. After the dust and debris settled 12 cars lay scattered across the track.

Only later did it become clear that, although Coulthard and Eddie Irvine had touched out of the corner, the Scot actually lost control of his McLaren after hitting a drain cover on the track.

With as many spare cars pressed into action as possible, only Olivier Panis, Mika Salo, Ricardo Rosset and Rubens Barrichello — who complained of an injured elbow — failed to make the restart.

This time it was the other McLaren — that of the championship leader Mika Hakkinen — which spun out of the hairpin and into retirement. The stage was set for Michael Schumacher to take the title lead, and his failure to do so sparked controversial scenes in the paddock.

Hill's erstwhile rival had been comfortably ahead when his Ferrari crashed into the back of Coulthard's McLaren as he attempted to lap it. The German three-wheeled back to the pits and out of the race, leaping from his damaged car in a fit of rage. He stormed down to the McLaren garage, where their mechanics had to restrain him from lashing out at Coulthard, whom he accused of causing the accident.

"Are you trying to kill me?" shouted Schumacher as he was dragged away. The double world champion was summond by the stewards immediately after the race to account for his unruly behaviour, while Coulthard's car — which had lost its rear wing in the impact — was duly repaired and resumed the race to finish a distant seventh.

The stewards eventually dismissed the incident as a racing accident, with no sanction being taken against either driver.

Jean Alesi's Sauber came home in third place, followed in fourth by the Williams of Heinz-Harald Frentzen.

**Football** Premiership: Newcastle United 1 Liverpool 4

# Ruud shock for new coach

**David Lacey**

RUUD GULLIT was as good as his word — up to a point anyway. Entertainment in abundance returned to St James' Park last Sunday and one of England's two best strikers scored a hat-trick inside a quarter of an hour.

Unhappily for the supporters of Newcastle United the fun was provided by Liverpool, and the brisk hat-trick by Michael Owen. The response of the Newcastle team to having a famous Dutchman as manager was to play like tulips, especially at the back.

At times, particularly in the first half, a team of Tiny Tims could have tip-toed through Newcastle's midfield and defence. Liverpool's passing and movement will always punish opponents who stand still and leave spaces, and Owen's finishing here ensured that the punishment was absolute.

This was certainly not the dour but parsimonious Newcastle of Kenny Dalglish, whose unceremonious departure last week preceded Gullit's arrival. Yet neither was it the Newcastle of Kevin Keegan, a team more in the habit of sharing goals than just giving them away.

Gullit watched the first half, when all the goals were scored, impassively from the stands. Tommy Craig and Alan Irvine, two of Dalglish's one-time assistants, had selected the side. "I won't pick the team," Gullit had said, "but I'll have a good look at what I've inherited."

In fact he needed only 45 minutes to study his legacy before moving down to the touchline in an effort to salvage something from the will. As he said afterwards: "It's very hard to do nothing."

By the time Gullit was able to get around to changing anything Newcastle's latest new dawn had clouded over with little hint of a silver lining. For the home supporters the day's only happy event was provided by the young woman who went into labour in the club shop before kick-off.

For Liverpool and England, however, the afternoon was highly rewarding. With seven points out of nine and a superior goal difference Liverpool have wasted little time rising to the top of the Premiership under Gérard Houllier and Roy Evans.

And with England beginning their European Championship qualifiers in Sweden on Saturday there could hardly have been a better moment for Owen to reproduce his World Cup form. Add an industrious contribution from Jamie Redknapp, still very much part of Glenn Hoddle's plans, and the day was much more than merely a Newcastle anti-climax.

With David Batty both suspended and injured, Newcastle could ill afford to lose Dietmar Hamann after only 12 minutes with a damaged knee. This left them exposed to the power of Paul Ince, the vision of Redknapp and Patrik Berger's eagerness to gain a regular place in the Liverpool side.

At times Liverpool moved the ball forward with embarrassing ease, brushing aside half-hearted challenges and simply playing the ball past Newcastle's ponderous defence, leaving Owen's pace to do the rest. Gullit had been greeted rapturously from the stands and an ecstatic PA announcer declared it to be the "beginning of a new world".

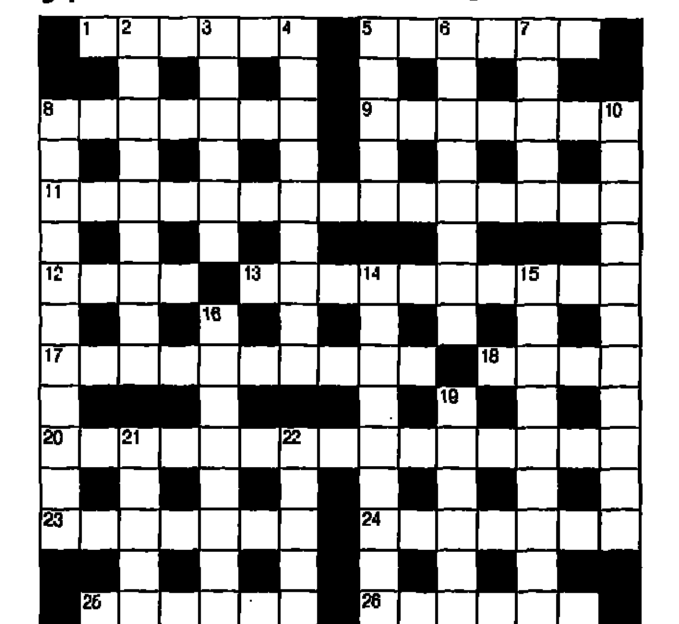
Certainly Newcastle appeared not to be on the same planet.

While abject defending undoubtedly exaggerated the drama of the 18-year-old striker's latest achievement, it was still superb finishing. In the 16th minute Shay Given could only push a 25-yard drive from Ince straight to Owen, who volleyed the ball in at the near post. Another minute and Steve McManaman had sent Owen through a square, static defence to draw Given off his line before slipping Liverpool's second through the goalkeeper's legs.

Liverpool supporters promptly began an ironic chant of "Dalglish, Dalglish", followed by a plea to "sack the board". Four minutes before the half-hour Stéphane Guivarc'h, whom Dalglish had signed from Auxerre for $5.8 million, marked his first appearance for Newcastle by scoring off a post after Robert Lee had caught Phil Babb in possession on the right and laid the ball across low.

But within six minutes Karlheinz Riedle had won the ball off Laurent Charvet before sending Owen on another scamper through Newcastle's defence, this time to beat Given with a beautifully taken shot. Then Berger ended the first half by beating Steve Watson and Charvet on the left before adding Liverpool's fourth.

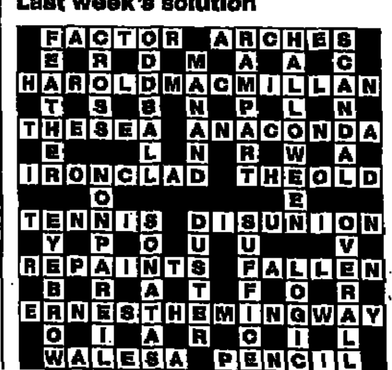
## Cryptic crossword by Bunthorne



**Across**
1 Second set of principles laid down before the finish (6)
5 Bats first scored with Delius . . . (6)
8 . . . and carrying too much weight, you say, with the Guardian . . . (7)
9 . . . and our Eastern form of verse (7)
11 He'd be the way bats might celebrate a successful delivery (3,3,5,4)
12,13 Short-term interest not enough to shake the world (4,4,6)
17 A key from Ravel on short musical work of Joel Chandler Harris (5,5)
18 Amundsen's forwarding address (4)
20 Oh! Handouts by rulers, one gathered (8,7)
23 The last words on East Germany's European come-back . . . (7)
24 . . . and come back as Scotland's own Housman, firm and continent (7)
25 Inside information leading to a run on the water into wine site (6)
26 Doctor enlisted by great river fleet (6)

**Down**
2 Tom needs a pick-me-up: he looks like death! (9)
3 Woman police officer's absorbed when standing for ages (6)
4 It stops 500 cars: bike an alternative? (4,5)
5 Native American with many a wife (5)
6 Where Ruskin went to study is not debatable (8)
7 English supporting 20s by the gross (5)
8 Not many saw Smith win; and under anaesthetic (3,2,6)
10 And Germany's ruler over these, with a place for Nemo (5,3,3)
14 Sheep bearing feathers (9)
15 Constant and laid back about a government reversal (9)
16 Punt, dappled shade, pool — miraculous! (8)
19 Saint among Le Mans entrants (6)
21 Professional twister, or twister's aide (5)
22 Pack-leader also known as "The Spanish Intruder" (5)

**Last week's solution**




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Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and mailing offices. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office.